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PATHWAYS FROM RELIGIOSITY TO COUPLE'S SATISFACTION THROUGH RELATIONAL VIRTUES AND EQUALITY IN TWO CULTURES

Ilya A. Okhotnikov

University of Kentucky, ilyaokhotnikov@gmail.com

Author ORCID Identifier:

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7719-0074>

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Ilya A. Okhotnikov, Student

Dr. Nathan D. Wood, Major Professor

Dr. Hyungsoo Kim, Director of Graduate Studies

PATHWAYS FROM RELIGIOSITY TO COUPLE'S SATISFACTION
THROUGH RELATIONAL VIRTUES AND EQUALITY
IN TWO CULTURES

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Agriculture, Food and Environment
at the University of Kentucky

By
Ilya A. Okhotnikov

Lexington, Kentucky
Director: Dr. Nathan D. Wood, Associate Professor of Family Sciences
Lexington, Kentucky
2018

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<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7719-0074>

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

PATHWAYS FROM RELIGIOSITY TO COUPLE'S SATISFACTION THROUGH RELATIONAL VIRTUES AND EQUALITY IN TWO CULTURES

To explore relational processes of couple's satisfaction this study drew on the relational spirituality framework (Mahoney, 2010) in order to test a relational religiosity model to evaluate the effects of public, private, ideological, intellectual, and experiential religiosity that were mediated by relational virtues of commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, and sanctification and relational equality on couple's satisfaction in two cultures. Data for this component used convenience samples of English-speaking respondents (hereafter American sample; $n = 1,529$) and Russian-speaking respondents (hereafter Russian sample; $n = 529$). Results provided evidence to partially support relational religiosity model; specifically commitment, while a statistically significant intervening element, worked alongside other relational virtues such as (a) sanctification, as hypothesized, to positively mediate the indirect effect of ideological religiosity on couple's satisfaction for the American men, ($\beta = .17$, 95% BCa CI [.11, .24], $p < .001$); (b) sanctification, as hypothesized, to positively mediate the indirect effect of experiential religiosity for the Russian men ($\beta = .39$, 95% BCa CI [.12, .65], $p = .002$); and (c) sacrifice and forgiveness, contrary to the hypotheses, to negatively mediate the indirect ($\beta = -.20$, 95% BCa CI [-.35, -.06], $p = .005$) and total ($\beta = -.27$, 95% BCa CI [-.43, -.12], $p = .001$) effects of ideological religiosity on couple's satisfaction among Russian women.

The second approach to this topic followed the family systems perspective, to examine the effect of religiosity on respondents' own and their partners' satisfaction with the relationship via the actor-partner interdependence model (APIM) (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006). This dyadic approach used samples of 435 American couples ($n = 870$) and 129 Russian couples ($n = 258$). The results provided evidence to support an actor effect of husbands' religiosity on their own couple's satisfaction for the American ($t = 2.00$, $p = .046$, $\beta = .15$, 95% CI [.01, .29]) and Russian ($t = 3.65$, $p < .001$, $\beta = .45$, 95% CI [.21, .70]) husbands. Moreover, APIM testing provided sufficient evidence to support a positive partner effect in that husband's religiosity predicted their wives' satisfaction with the relationship in the American ($t = 2.06$, $p = .041$, $\beta = .17$, 95% CI [.01, .33]) and Russian ($t = 2.77$, $p = .006$, $\beta = .37$, 95% CI [.11, .64]) couples. The parallels between the cultures strongly resembled existing cross-cultural dyadic scholarship providing

compelling evidence to support cultural similarities rather than differences and suggesting that cross-cultural relational dissimilarities might not exist in the ways religiosity is linked to couple's satisfaction; however, the differences between male and female respondents in each culture might be worth studying further. Additionally, this dissertation's results and scholarship mentioned above reveal that religiosity and couple's satisfaction may be indifferent to cultural variations suggesting these phenomena may be universal rather than culture-specific. Outcomes of this dissertation may benefit researchers, educators, policy makers, and practitioners who are interested in relationship virtues and religiosity's effect on couple's satisfaction, which is known to provide a positive connection to the psychological, social, physical, and spiritual well-being of couples.

KEYWORDS: APIM, couples, family processes, relational virtues, religion, Russian.

Ilya A. Okhotnikov

11/29/2018

Date

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By
Ilya A. Okhotnikov

Nathan D. Wood, Ph.D.

Director of Dissertation

Hyungsoo Kim, Ph.D.

Director of Graduate Studies

11/29/2018

Date

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Long-term satisfying and intimate relationships form the foundation of family life and positively correlate to the social, psychological, physical, financial, and spiritual well-being of couples and to a broad range of outcomes for their children. Clinicians, researchers, and educators who are interested in relationship satisfaction (hereafter referred to as marital, partners', or couple's satisfaction) aim to identify relational processes that increase couples' unity, minimize harmful and destructive relationship practices, and ultimately improve relationships. They continually seek ideas that help to understand the nature of marital satisfaction through a better understanding of relationship processes by offering theories and models that include a broader context in which interpersonal relations occur (Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000).

In the 1990s, scholars began to question the centrality of relationship skills in spousal interaction to explain the variability of couple's satisfaction (Bradbury et al., 2000; Fawcett, Fawcett, Hawkins, & Yorgason, 2013; Fincham et al., 2007; Fincham & Beach, 2010b; Fowers, 1998). However, in theorizing about the couple and family relationships, the available family theories did not incorporate such a concept as "relational virtues." Thus in the 1990s, researchers proposed positive relational processes that created a favorable context for the skill-based methods to be used for the well-being of committed relationships (Fowers, 1998). Fincham et al. (2007), Schramm Galovan, and Goddard (2017), Stanley (2007) robustly presented evidence-based research that operationalized relational virtues as the positive relational processes that appeared to explain couple's satisfaction to a greater degree than that of skill-based measures. Therefore, without

neglecting the skills-based research, studying relational virtues became a growing emphasis in search to provide explanatory power to couple's satisfaction.

Finally, Mahoney (2010), using these four relational virtues (emerging relational domains) summarized research on how religious couples processed their relationship throughout the life course and offered a new theoretical framework, relational spirituality. These relational virtues of commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, and sanctification of marriage do not only explain how couples establish, maintain, and transform their relationships but also may, indeed, illuminate the specific relational mechanisms that forge deeper connection or effect repairs to the relationship (Fincham et al., 2007) and may shed light on the pathways to couple's satisfaction.

It is plausible to study the relational virtues for several reasons. First, the study of relational virtues fills a gap in scholarship on the study of characteristics that represent a broader than skills based context to explain how couples maintain their relationship. The study of relational virtues is a pursuit for a more multifaceted and detailed approach to the study of the positive relational processes in the couple relationship versus people skills. Second, the study of these relational virtues provides advanced knowledge of the positive dynamics that may explain underlying variability in couple's satisfaction that supports everyday interactions resulting in a personal pursuit of doing well for one another (Fincham et al., 2007; Fowers, 2001; 2005).

Third, the relationship satisfaction is a dyadic process grounded in the interconnectedness and mutual influences; thus, the dyadic data is a more complex approximation to modeling relationship influences that are connected to couple's satisfaction. Also, dyadic conceptualization and analysis is a response to a call for

sophistication and advancement in relationship satisfaction assessment. In part, the sophistication consists of moving away from individual-based theorizing and methodology to dyadic theorizing, conceptualizing, modeling and analysis of the committed relationship between the two individuals. Scholars have increasingly used the dyadic modeling in studies of shared human experiences such as attachment (e.g., Campbell, Simpson, Kashy, & Rholes, 2001; Hill-Soderlund et al., 2008), intimate relationships (e.g., Ledermann, Bodenmann, Rudaz, & Bradbury, 2010; Peterson, Pirritano, Christensen, & Schmidt, 2008), and parenting (e.g., Nelson, O'Brien, Blankson, Calkins, & Keane, 2009; Paschall & Mastergeorge, 2016).

Finally, the application of the relational spirituality framework (Mahoney, 2010) in another country may clarify the applicability of the theory in a cross-cultural setting and contribute to the discussion of the universality of couple's processes and a degree to which, for example, in this dissertation, the religiosity connects to satisfaction via relational virtues and relational equality across cultures. Individual religiosity is an important factor in family life; it penetrates all areas of committed relationships, such as attitudes toward marriage, relationship with a spouse or partner, commitment to the partner, and others. The next section offers a survey of religious connections and marriage.

1.1 Religion, Religiosity, Spirituality, and Family

For many centuries, marriage and relational processes in marriage were directly connected to organized religion and grounded in personal religiosity (Mahoney, Pargament, Tarakeshwar, & Swank, 2001). Only in recent history have committed relationships been separated from formal religion, yet the influence of individual religiosity or its absence on the intimate relationship is still meaningful as scholarship documents (e.g., Mahoney et al.,

2001; Pargament, Mahoney, Exline, Jones, & Shafranske, 2013). Consequently, religiosity refers to participation or involvement in “the search for significance that occurs within the context of established institutions that are designed to facilitate spirituality” (Mahoney, 2013, p. 366). Religiosity is a personalization of religion that is revealed as a multifaceted and multivalent phenomenon incorporating the numerous constructs such as thoughts or understandings, feelings or emotions, beliefs or patterns of plausibility, actions or behaviors, and experiences or encounters that vary in magnitude, intensity, salience, importance, or centrality (Huber & Huber, 2012; Pargament et al., 2013). Religiosity is connected to multiple dimensions of human functioning—such as interests, attitudes, personal and public behaviors, experiences, and physiological responses—that are dynamic in their nature and may change over time.

Often scholars, educators, practitioners, and others use the terms of religiosity and spirituality interchangeably, but the current scholarly discourse and the changing of the U.S. religious demographic landscape suggests treating religiosity and spirituality as separate constructs (Lipka, 2015; Pargament et al., 2013). Pargament (2013) suggested the two constructs—religiosity and spirituality—are different yet interrelated; a person can be anywhere on a continuum from spiritual but not religious to religious but not spiritual. Nonetheless, these two concepts are not polarizing or antagonistic but reasonably overlapping paradigms. The American Psychological Association’s *Handbook of Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality* proposed that spirituality “reflects a distinctive, in some ways irreducible, human motivation, a yearning for the sacred [and] may be a distinctive human motivation and process, one that contributes in unique ways to health and well-being” (Pargament, 2013, p. 257). Spirituality is a broader overarching concept

that refers to human investment in transcendent values that are lived out in daily life and reveal themselves in the relationships with others. Spirituality is a human process that contributes in unique ways to the relationship's well-being for those practicing spirituality either within or outside of organized religions (Pargament, 2013). Due to the enormous persistence of organized religious entities that foster spirituality by offering places to practice it, this study accounted for the spirituality aspect by using the term *religiosity* indicating connections of spiritual realm to organized religions. The discourse of variations of religiosity and spirituality in family research is beyond limits of this study; for more information please see Zaloudek, Ruder-Vasconez, and Doll (2017).

One reason for considering connections between religiosity and couple's satisfaction is the fact that the majority of the U.S. population (76.5%) identify as religious; Christian affiliation constitutes 70.6%, non-Christian share is 5.9%, and unaffiliated (atheists, agnostics, nothing in particular) portion is 22.8% of the U.S. adult population according to Pew Research Center (Lipka, 2015). Walsh (2013) indicates that religiosity is a meaningful human experience, one of the four domains of human functioning (biological, psychological, social, and spiritual) that affects almost all spheres of family functioning. For a large majority of the U.S. adult population, their personal religiosity is a meaningful human experience that is linked to marital satisfaction and provides a potential to tie couples' relationship processes to the broader context in the quest of explaining pathways to couple's satisfaction (Fincham et al., 2007; Fowers 1998; Mahoney, 2010).

Next, a large body of research summarized in the American Psychological Association's *Handbook of Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality* indicated that being involved in religion and spirituality contributed positively to mental, emotional, and

physical health (Mahoney, 2013; Pargament, 2013; Pargament, Smith, Koenig, & Perez, 1998) and to marital satisfaction (Edgell, 2005; Mahoney, 2010; Mahoney et al., 2001; Waite, & Lehrer, 2003). For instance, researchers have documented that a husband and wife's homogeneous religious views were strongly and positively related to their couple's satisfaction (Fincham, & Beach, 2010; Larsen, & Olson, 2004; Olson, Marshall, Goddard, & Schramm, 2015; Waite, & Lehrer, 2003). Likewise, joint spiritual activities (e.g., prayer) were associated with higher marriage stability (Beach, Fincham, Hurt, McNair, & Stanley, 2008; Butler, Stout, & Gardner, 2002). Additionally, a moderation effect of sex (male vs. female) was found to be connected to religious attendance in the following way: When a husband (with or without his wife) was attending church, both spouses benefited personally; however, the same dual positive impacts were not present when only the wife was attending religious services (Fincham, & Beach, 2010; Wilcox, & Dew, 2011).

Another reason to study religiosity is the fact that religiosity positively connects to couple's satisfaction by promoting values and norms necessary to maintain committed relationships (Ellison, Burdette, & Wilcox, 2010; Fincham, Ajayi, & Beach, 2011), especially when the views on religion and religious participation are similar between spouses (Heaton & Pratt, 1990). Scholars have recognized that religiosity facilitates positive relational virtues that foster a sense of wholeness, harmony, and connection with the most intimate relationship bonds (Day & Acock, 2013; Mahoney, 2010; Walsh, 2013). Such virtues also have been reported to strengthen marriages that are not in distress (Mahoney & Cano, 2014; Waite & Lehrer, 2003). Even though research supports positive connections between religiosity grounded virtues and couple's satisfaction, there is still little known about two areas, namely, how the different domains of religiosity are linked

to relational virtues (and couple's satisfaction) and how relational virtues are connected to couple's satisfaction. These specific relational processes and relationship maintenance strategies may be grounded in personal religiosity and, thus, be expressed through relational virtues.

Further, this dissertation responds to a call expressed in scholarship in the study of religiosity and its connections to family life. For example, experts in the field of psychology, sociology, and religion (e.g., Mahoney, 2010; 2013; Pargament et al., 2013; Waite & Lehrer, 2003) suggest that the nexus of religiosity, marriage, and family is yet to be examined as moving beyond simple global measures of self-identified spirituality, religiosity or religious attendance (Pargament et al., 2013). Therefore, this dissertation utilized a novice theoretical framework of relational spirituality (Mahoney, 2010), which identified key relational processes that explain couples' relational functioning that goes beyond the simplicity of attendance and self-identifying religiosity.

Finally, Christian religiosity is known to offer behavioral scripts in marriage by promoting husbands' leadership over their wives in relationship (Haavio-Mannila & Kontula, 1997; Kornrich, Brines, & Leupp, 2012, Simon & Gagnon, 1986). Few studies have simultaneously included both, the hierarchical religiously driven role division at home (hypothesized as a negative effect of religion on the spousal relationship) and positive relational processes of commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, and attitudes toward sanctification of marriage to evaluate the effects of religiosity on couple's satisfaction. Therefore, relational equality warrants further attention in research on interpersonal relationship in marriage and partnership.

1.2 Relational Equality

Some research on religious couples reported the existence of inequality and unequal decision-making distribution between husband and wife via traditional role division limiting the wife's access to personal economic, educational, and social resources, thus negatively affecting the couple relationship (Dobash & Dobash, 2003; Solt, 2011; Tilly, 1999). Spouses who follow religious teachings tend to resemble the teachings' prescribed marital behaviors in family life; for example, the subordination of the wife to her husband. Scholarship has indicated that socially constructed beliefs and attitudes about norms that men and women should follow in marriage, such as gender ideology, are moderated by the level of individual religiosity (Perry & Whitehead, 2016; Sanchez, 1994). Religiosity adds more of a traditional influence on the gender roles at home (Christopher & Sprecher, 2000); however, such moderation is even more frequently observed in those individuals who are less religious, thus providing evidence that subordination and lack of equality were present more frequently in less religious couples (Perry & Whitehead; Christopher & Sprecher). Scholars used different operationalization for equality; therefore, a brief survey of equality and its connection to a couple's satisfaction is warranted and will be used in this dissertation.

Western scholars of family systems argued for the importance of communication between spouses to be the focus of a happy marriage (Walsh, 1982). Consistent with the time, they did not attend to the role that equality between husband and wife plays regarding their marital satisfaction (Dall, Cowan, & Cowan, 1995). However, the rise of the feminist theory (as applied to marital relations, e.g., McQuillan & Ferree, 1998) and other events of the 20th century (e.g., World War II) gave a rise of dual-earning families and support for the different views of "his marriage" and "her marriage" (e.g., Bernard, 1974). Thus, scholars

gave strong consideration to the phenomenon of equality in families in the 1960s and 1970s (e.g., Cromwell & Olson, 1975; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970; Turk & Bell, 1972). At that time relational scholars viewed equality conceptually as “traditional” role division at home, illustrated by male dominance, assigned as a trait of patriarchy, and resulting in male control over the spousal access to resources outside the home (Olson, Fine, & Lloyd, 2008). Sultana (2012) discussed the widespread view of male dominance at home as well as decision-making and financial provision for the family had been historically grounded in and supported by organized religion. This scholar also reported that this trend was still present in the U.S. population and echoed a negative connection to couple’s satisfaction, although scholars detected a slow decline of male dominance in family life (Sultana).

Contrary to the notion of male dominance, several experts found that religiosity buffers against inequity, contributing to couple’s satisfaction in a more positive than negative way (DeMaris, Mahoney, & Pargament, 2010; Kusner, Mahoney, Pargament, & DeMaris 2014). The connection of religiosity to couple’s satisfaction is still a meaningful topic in scholarship; therefore, currently, the question is still in discourse: How does religiosity affect couple’s satisfaction? On the one hand, scholars found that religiosity contributed to spousal inequality and was also known to be linked to unhappy marriages (Denton, 2004; Dobash & Dobash, 2003; Ellison & Anderson, 2001). On the other hand, a larger body of research scholarship (e.g., Butler et al., 2002; Goodman & Dollahite, 2006; Hodge, 2013). This ambiguous outcome has suggested that religiosity was positively linked to couple’s satisfaction; such a trend is documented in suggested including equality in addition to the relational virtues of commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, and sanctification of marriage that was derived from the theory, which is introduced next.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

Scholars define relational spirituality in various ways when accounting for different dynamics of human behavior and social interaction. To theoretically approximate religiosity's effect on couples' processes, this current study used the relational spirituality framework (Mahoney, 2010). That, in turn, built upon a Mahoney, Pargament, Swank, & Tarakeshwar (2001) meta-analytic study that reviewed the literature from 1980 through 1999 to examine the role of religion in marital and parental relationships. Through the lens of relational spirituality, Mahoney (2010) organized scholarly evidence concerning the creation, maintenance, and transformation of a couple's relationship that were linked to the individual level of religiosity. The current study highlighted how spiritual cognitions, feelings, behaviors, and experiences were mediated by relational virtues such as commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, and sanctification of marriage. In addition, relational equality in couples promoted their sense of connection, strength, happiness, hope, comfort, and fullness. There were only a few aspects studied that constitute the couple's satisfaction. This study examined the heterosexual couples to find support for sex differences or commonalities between and to account for the mutual interdependence within heterosexual couples. The prevailing majority of the US population is identified as heterosexual individuals. For example, 79%-93% of women and 91%-95% of men identify as exclusively straight (Copen, Chandra, & Febo-Vazquez, 2016; Lindley, Walsemann, & Carter, 2012). In addition to evaluating individual experiences in a relationship with a spouse or partner, this dissertation aimed to study the couple's satisfaction accounting for mutual influence, interconnectedness, and interdependence in two-person relationships. This conceptual view of a dyadic relationship allows for evaluation of the effects of mutual influences that take place in committed relationships.

1.4 Dyadic Conceptualization

The importance of the dyadic nature of a couple's satisfaction cannot be overestimated due to the interrelatedness' nature of the relationship. Although many scholars examine individuals in relationships, it is essential to use the dyadic approach for accurate assessment for effects of two individuals on themselves and on their partner. While there is no absolute interpretation and or standard meaning of attitudes, behaviors, or feelings, indeed spouses do interpret, speak, and behave based on their perception of how another spouse views the person and that person's own interpretation (Allen & Doherty, 2004). These interpretations motivate future interaction; thus, evaluating relationship satisfaction will be enhanced while evaluating the partner's effect between spouses in their experiences couple's satisfaction.

Furthermore, the concept of interrelatedness and causality of processes from the systems theory perspective suggests that the couple's interactions are not linear but circular (Broderick, 1993; Haefner, 2014). Specifically, when one spouse (called the actor) changes her or his attitude, emotions, or behavior, this change may produce meaningful shifts in feelings and/or behaviors of another spouse (called the partner; each spouse is an actor and a partner), which in turn affects the actor's perception of the spousal behaviors, feelings, or attitudes. Committed relationships may be conceptualized and modeled via a systemic methodology describing marriage as a dynamic system that consists of interrelated dyadic relationships (Shannon, Baumwell, & Tamis-LeMonda, 2013). This dissertation relied on systemic approach to examine and explain the actor and partner effects in the relationship between the spouses.

Relational spirituality (Mahoney, 2010) brings up specific spiritual cognitions and interpersonal behaviors that explain variability in couple's satisfaction at the dyadic level

conceptually. When couple's processes are operationalized and analyzed at the dyadic level, the relationship evaluation becomes more precise and accurate without missing important pieces of information to explain the interrelatedness and non-independence of the relationship between spouses (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006). Further, a trend of positive associations between religiosity and relationship outcomes for married couples is well established in the scholarship (e.g., Wolfinger & Wilcox, 2008; Wilcox, 2004; Christiano, 2000), yet scholars have given limited attention to the interpersonal effects of one's religiosity on the partner's relational satisfaction at the dyadic level of conceptualization, modeling, and analysis. Therefore, much is yet to be discovered about how one spouses' religiosity is connected to their partner's satisfaction in the committed relationship.

Finally, the current state of inquiry about relationship aims to study the same relational processes in various cultures. Such studies enrich understanding of the same dynamics in various settings around the world and provide evidence for commonalities and differences and their interpretation. The current study has also aimed to contribute to the growing body of literature for cross-cultural application of the relational spirituality (Maloney, 2010) in committed relationships and the study of the religiously grounded interdependence' effects on couple's satisfaction in two cultures.

1.5 Cross-Cultural Application

The fact that the relational spirituality framework (Mahoney, 2010) used data only from North American samples poses a potential for cross-cultural testing of the models grounded in relational spirituality to generate new knowledge above and beyond previous scholarship (Day & Acock, 2013; Mahoney & Cano, 2014). To date, scholars rarely used relational spirituality other than in North American cultures—partly because the framework

is rather new. However, given the rapid globalization of the world, understanding relationship dynamics cross-culturally is essential. Cross-cultural research is inevitable in the contemporary multicultural environment; yet, before comparing data with other cultures, a certain level of knowledge about relational processes within those cultures is imperative for scholars, educators, practitioners, and the public. Therefore, the study of the pathways to couple's satisfaction other than in North American population may yield evidence supporting whether differences or commonalities of marital satisfaction, positive relationship processes, relational equality, and religiosity. This dissertation considered the Russian population, which is under researched compared to others.

For example, a recent renaissance of religious and societal freedoms since the 1990s has reformed Russian culture by allowing demographic and social shifts such as increased traditionalism in attitudes toward roles division at home (Zircon, 2013). Russia presents an excellent opportunity for research for several reasons. First, Russia is a European country with the largest population (approximately 142,9 million) and is culturally very diverse; there are 200 ethnicities among which ethnic Russians constitute 81% of the population (Russian Census, 2010).

Second, the presence of religious freedom between 1991 and 2017 offers a unique opportunity to test the premises of the relational spirituality framework in the population of the newly acquired religious freedoms. Such populations have not experienced transgenerational transmission of religious teachings, behaviors connected with those teachings; therefore, it is plausible to suggest that relational processes between spouses may be different rather than similar to those found in the population with a multi-generational record of religious freedom. The question is: Would the relational processes

connect religiosity to couple's satisfaction in the same structure, intensity, and magnitude as in countries with religious freedom across many generations?

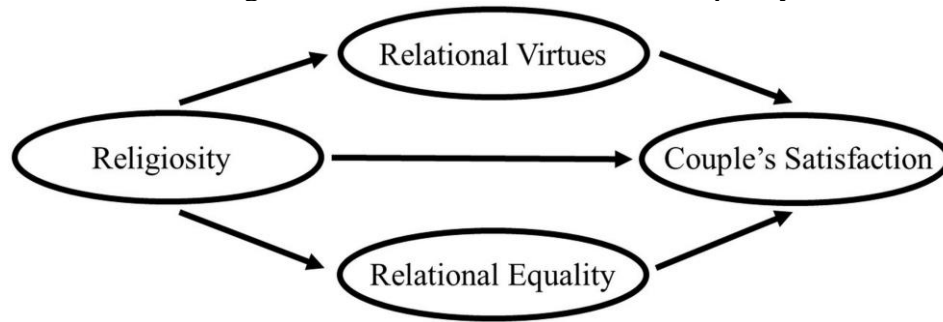
Third, during the 1990s-2000s, the rise of publications on couple relationship in other cultures (Sireci, 2015) reflected new challenges of globalization, specifically as they related to the understanding of relationship satisfaction in cultures different from those in North America. The majority of the previous studies on relationship satisfaction used samples from North America. Therefore, the following intuitive questions arise: Is relationship satisfaction culture-specific or universal? Would variations due to cultural differences between the West and the East yield effects that could be due to cultural and not religious factors connected to variations couple's satisfaction? Could positive relationship processes found in one culture function the same in another culture? How do the culture and religion of the region affect positive relationship processes that couples use to maintain their relationships? Therefore, this study utilized English- and Russian-speaking samples representing mostly the North American and Russian context.

1.6 Conceptual Model

This study tested a *relational religiosity model* grounded in the relational spirituality framework (Mahoney, 2010). Mahoney's work illuminated the emerging specific relational processes, also called as relational virtues such as commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, and sanctification, which help explain how religiosity might enrich relationships, including those experiencing distance and frustration. Some researchers already used Mahoney's framework and found an indirect positive effect of religiosity on couples' well-being through relational virtues (Day & Acock, 2013). Following Day and Acock's application of Mahoney's framework, this dissertation first, proposed a relational

religiosity model and, second, applied it in two cultures to gain insight on the mediating effects of relational virtues and relational equality that connected religiosity domains with couples' satisfaction (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 Conceptual approach to relational religiosity model connecting religiosity and couple's satisfaction through relational virtues and relational equality.



1.7 Definition of Terms

The processes in couple's relationship include engagements, behaviors, and interactions that result in implications for the relationship as well as for each partner individually. A relationship process refers to engaging in interactive behaviors with the spouse or partner that result in outcomes on a spectrum from enhancing and sustaining the relationship to destroying and terminating it. This dissertation uses the following definitions.

1.7.1 Spouse or Partner

These terms refer to a person in a committed heterosexual relationship through marriage or cohabitation and have been used interchangeably. A note of importance is that the actor-partner interdependence model used in this dissertation operates with the terms of actor and partner referring to a couple. Therefore, to prevent misunderstandings

I used the term spouse more often than I used partner, reserving the “partner” term for the model use.

1.7.2 Couple’s Satisfaction

This term refers to overall evaluation of the relationships that reflect their meaningful awareness of what the relationship represents, how it functions, and in which direction it goes (Mattson, Rogge, Johnson, Davidson, & Fincham, 2013). In this study, the terms couples, marital, and relationship are used interchangeably and refer to the interpersonal relationship between the two individuals in a committed relationship such as marriage or cohabitation.

1.7.3 Relational Virtues

This term describes several relationship processes theorized to enhance couple’s satisfaction, such as commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, and attitudes toward sanctification of marriage (Mahoney, 2010; 2013).

1.7.4 Commitment

Commitment is a personal behavior that communicates persistence in a relationship or a sense of allegiance that is established for a long-term relationship with the spouse (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998).

1.7.5 Sacrifice

This term refers to a voluntary behavior, in which one gives up some personal, immediate self-interest for the sake of enhancing the interpersonal relationship or

pleasing the spouse (Stanley & Markman, 1992; Stanley, Whitton, Sadberry, Clements, & Markman, 2006).

1.7.6 Forgiveness

This term describes a personal disposition of a spouse to let go of the negative thoughts, emotions, and motivations (e.g., anger, resentment, or the desire to punish the partner who was the offender) and a willingness to return to a friendly relationship with the partner (Davis et al., 2015; Fincham & Beach, 2002; Neufeldt & Sparks, 2003).

1.7.7 Sanctification of Marriage

This term indicates a degree to which a spouse believes that a supernatural power (the Divine) is present in the marriage, or their relationship is embedded in the Divine or contains a sacred meaning, significance, or quality (Kusner et al., 2014; Mahoney, 2010).

1.7.8 Religiosity

This term refers to the presence of intellectual, ideological, private, public, and experiential religiosity defined as “the search for significance that occurs within the context of established institutions that are designed to facilitate spirituality” (Mahoney, 2013, p. 366).

1.7.9 Relational equality

This concept is defined as an extent to which one spouse may regulate the behavior of, impose limitations or benefits to another spouse, and make decisions that affect the other or their relationship without first obtaining consent (Day & Acock, 2013). Such actions may have either negative or positive effects on the relationship.

1.8 Statement of Purpose

Being guided by the relational spirituality framework (Mahoney, 2010, 2013), this dissertation tested a proposed model of relational religiosity that incorporated relational virtues and potential issues of relational equality between sexes to identify the pathways to relationship satisfaction at an individual level. The model tested the pathways of how relational virtues and relational equality connected religiosity with couple's satisfaction using a North American sample. Testing the model beyond the Western culture by using a sample of Russian speaking respondents was the second objective of this dissertation. The third objective was to evaluate the interdependence effects of the religiosity on couple's satisfaction at the dyadic level of analysis, and the same analysis applied to a Russian sample was the fourth objective.

1.9 Dissertation Organization

This study used a quantitative methodology and followed a traditional five-chapter format, beginning with an introduction to the topic in the first chapter. The second chapter detailed the theoretical constructs and literature review relevant to the overarching framework. The third chapter explained the methodology used in the study, including dyadic data analysis. The findings from the analyses were reported in the fourth chapter. Finally, the fifth chapter offered a discussion of results, implications, and ideas for future research.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to concerns among scholars about the fragility of marriage and negative consequences of relationship dissolution (e.g., Amato & Cheadle, 2005), the search for determinants of lasting, healthy, and flourishing committed relationships is growing. Scholars find that the satisfaction with an intimate relationship benefits personal well-being (Bryant & Conger, 2002), including one's physical and mental health, social and personal life (Heene, Buysee, & Van Oost, 2007; Hughes & Waite, 2009; Williams & Umberson, 2004), and the mental, psychological, and physical health of the couples' children and adolescents that is linked to the parents' abilities to keep a satisfied, strong, and lasting marriage (Barrett & Turner, 2005; Carr & Springer, 2010).

The maintenance of a satisfied and healthy relationship across the lifespan is contingent not only on the absence of negative interactions but more so on the presence of the positive relational processes. Thus, scholars began to recognize a fact that the overarching positive relational processes are necessary for successful use of relationship skills in committed relationships. Fostering positive relational processes combined with application of skill-based training may guide couples to enrich their lives and make their relationships flourish. Before describing the positive relational processes in terms of relationship virtues, such as commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, and attitudes toward sanctification of marriage, I offer a brief summary of skill-based approach on improving committed relationships that dominated the discourse of the 1990s.

2.1 Skill-Based Approach: Brief Summary

In the pursuit of enriching couple's satisfaction, researchers placed marital conflict as a central construct that accounted for couple's satisfaction. A large body of scholarship produced theories of distress, collected data on productive and destructive conflict resolution patterns, and completed numerous research reports on couples' interaction models that effectively targeted conflict dynamics in committed relationships (Beach, Wamboldt, Kaslow, Heyman, & Reiss, 2006; Booth, Crouter, & Clements, 2001; Fincham & Bradbury, 1987; Gottman, 1994; Kelly, Fincham, & Beach, 2003; Koerner & Jacobson, 1994; Rusbult, Zembrodt, & Gunn, 1982; Weiss & Heyman, 1997). Researchers argued that an increase of negative interaction between spouses also elevated the levels and frequency of conflict, which statistically contributed to the decline of marital satisfaction (e.g., Crosnoe & Cavanagh, 2010; Kluwer, 2010). Conversely, positive skill-facilitated interactions were found to increase the levels of satisfying bonds, which in turn lead to higher levels of relationship commitment (Gottman, Swanson, & Murray 1999; Gottman, Ryan, Swanson, & Swanson, 2005; Hawkins, Fowers, Carroll, & Yang, 2007).

Notwithstanding these encouraging results on positive relationship skills, many researchers found either none, or only marginal, or mixed evidence to support meaningful effect sizes of those relational skills on couple's satisfaction. For example, in a meta-analytic study (Hawkins & Erickson, 2015) found that relationship education results for diverse at-risk couples had small positive effects. Likewise, analysis of 115 longitudinal studies revealed inconclusive results of the effects of negative interaction behavior between spouses on the marital satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 1995) that was later supported and suggested that the positive and negative experiences in marriage are somewhat independent (Fincham & Rogge, 2010). Thus, a large body of scholarship provided very strong

arguments in favor of embracing the more profound or more fundamental relational constructs such as *relational virtues* that positively connect the two people for a healthy, satisfied, and flourishing relationship (Fincham et al., 2007; Fowers, 1998, 2001; Schramm et al., 2017; Williamson, Altman, Hsueh, & Bradbury, 2016).

2.2 Relational Virtues Approach Overview

Many scholars have noted that relational strengths (virtues) are assumed when teaching couples about relationship skills (Fowers 1998, Fincham & Beach; 2010; Stanley, 2007); however, the relationship virtues received less attention and recognition of their importance for couple's satisfaction than skill based approaches. Nonetheless, Fowers (1998) sought to unmask the good in marriage above and beyond the technicality of the skill-based means and arguably proposed that a set of virtues would locate interpersonal interaction in a broader context needs to take a central stage in scholarship as a means to enhance marriage. He argued that practitioners may succeed more effectively in administering couple relationship education if the content of teaching would emphasize and foster the underlying relational virtues (Aristotelian character strengths, i.e. virtues) necessary for a positive and functional relationship (Fowers, 2001).

Similarly, Fincham and Beach (2010), in their decade review, have called for research on interpersonal connection, engagement, and meaning that explain variability in couples' level of flourishing. Fincham and Beach suggested that scholarship provided evidence for positive influences of religious involvement that promoted marital virtues. Likewise, in search of processes that sustain marital relationships, Stanley (2007) has suggested vigorously pursuing research on positive relationship constructs because they appear to connect to a broader meaning and deeper motivation for couple's satisfaction

with their relationship. Stanley proposed that when marriages end, most of the negative dynamics before dissolution were the same, but when marriages thrive, the complexity and amount of positive and meaning-related constructs have received much less attention in scholarship. Correspondingly, Fincham and colleagues (2007) suggested that relationship satisfaction is less of a static individual construct and that those factors and processes that build up marriage appear to be more diverse, harder to hypothesize, and not easy to measure.

Next, Schramm et al., (2017) have persuasively shown that in scholarship between the 1980s and 2010s, communication and conflict management skills were weakly linked to relationship satisfaction, so the authors have indicated shifting attention to the study of positive virtues and relationship strengths as they relate to couples' satisfaction. Schramm et al. resonated with Fincham, Stanley, and Beach (2007) who have identified virtues that were relational, not intrapersonal in nature, and proposed increasing attention on self-regulatory domains of these relational virtues. For example, Fincham, Stanley, and Beach identified the relational virtues as commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, and sanctification of marriage. The ability to engage in positive relationship processes increases the level of relationship satisfaction in couples.

In summary, scholarship on couple's relationship has moved away from the study of skill-based relationship characteristics (e.g., communication, conflict resolution skills, etc.) and developed a growing momentum toward the study of larger constructs such as relationship virtues that provide spouses and partners with a sense of meaning and motivation to build up their relationships. Scholars have given some attention to each of the positive relationship processes (relational virtues) such as commitment (Fowers,

2000; Hawkins et al., 2007; Stanley & Markman, 1992), sacrifice (Fincham et al., 2007; Stanley & Markman, 1992; Stanley et al., 2006), forgiveness (Fincham, 2000; McCullough et al., 1998, Rye et al., 2000), and attitudes toward sanctification of marriage (Mahoney et al., 1999). However, it was Mahoney (2010) who holistically presented these relational virtues in her relational spirituality framework. Next, I first discuss religion, religiosity, and their connection to relational virtues and marriage. In the following section, I review the literature related to the positive relationship process of commitment, forgiveness, sacrifice, and sanctification of marriage.

2.3 Religion, Religiosity, and Marriage

Fincham and Beach (2010) in their decade review noted a growing interest in religion and religiosity that necessitated more research on the processes that religion and religiosity bring to family life. Religion is known to be a positive factor for relationship stability and satisfaction. In fact, researchers continuously find convincing evidence that compare to couples scoring lower on religiosity, those with higher levels of religiosity experience higher relationship satisfaction (e.g., Larson & Olson, 2004; Mahoney et al., 2001; Olson et al., 2015). Religiously homogeneous couples who share and practice their faith in the same religion reveal strong trends of higher levels of couple's satisfaction (Fincham & Beach, 2010; Heaton & Pratt, 1990; Wilcox & Wolfinger, 2008). Further, among low-income couples "religious affiliation and personal religious beliefs mattered less than when couples *shared* similar beliefs about God's divine plans for them and their relationship, prayed together, or attended religious services together" (Lichter & Carmalt, 2009, p. 185). Likewise, Edgell (2005), Mahoney, (2010, 2013), Mahoney et al. (2001), Pargament (2013), Pargament et al. (1998), and Waite & Lehrer (2003) discovered that

couples in the same religion also meaningfully and positively contributed to a person's health, emotions, and well-being.

Additionally, scholars suggested that religion and individual religiosity was one of the demographic predictor variables that played an influential decisive role in couples' relationships (Fincham & Beach; Mahoney et al., 2001; Larson & Olson, 2004; Olson et al., 2015). For instance, personal religiosity benefited individuals in crisis situations (Waite & Lehrer, 2003). Weekly attendance of religious services was positively associated with (a) stability of marriages (Shapiro, Gottman, & Carrère, 2000), (b) higher marital satisfaction of female partners (Dew & Wilcox, 2011), and (c) couple's satisfaction especially during tense times of transitioning through family life stages (e.g., becoming parents; Helms-Erikson, 2001; Kluwer, 2010; Wilcox & Dew, 2011). Religious participation "appears to increase the incidence of interpersonal behaviors conducive to good relationships, such as affection" (Wilcox & Wolfinger, 2008, p. 840) and "has stronger effects than almost all sociodemographic factors in predicting relationship quality among urban parents" (Wolfinger & Wilcox, 2008, p. 1326).

Nonetheless, what remains unclear is how specifically religion and individual religiosity make these positive effects on couple's satisfaction and which processes connect individual's religious thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and encounters with their sense of satisfaction in their committed relationship. Given the compelling evidence of individual religiosity's link to couple's satisfaction and the need to increase the depth of understanding of how relational processes are connected to the couple's satisfaction, this dissertation was guided by the framework of relational spirituality (Mahoney, 2010), which is described next.

2.4 The Relational Spirituality Framework

In 2010, in her decade review of the scholarship during 1999–2009 describing the role religion played in marital and parental relationships, Mahoney offered this novel framework of relational spirituality following an earlier meta-analysis of the role that religion and spirituality played in family life in 1980–1999 (Mahoney, Pargament, Swank, & Tarakeshwar, 2001). Relational spirituality is a suitable theoretical approach to evaluate the effect of religious involvement on a couple's satisfaction. This framework provided a meaningful way to (a) theoretically approximate formation, maintenance, and transformation of the relationships; (b) construct models of marital relationship; and (c) quantitatively evaluate couples' relationship processes as an alternative way to a skill-based theorizing about (e.g., communication and conflict resolution skills) and explaining the pathways to couple's satisfaction. The framework clarifies unique functions of religion for families and, perhaps better illuminates specific aspects of how religious concepts express themselves in committed relationships through specific positive relational processes (relational virtues) that explain variability in couple's satisfaction.

In general, relational spirituality was used in describing the three time-varying family relationship phases: formation, maintenance, and transformation of family relationships. The author proposed that relationship processes be derived from cognitions and behaviors based on individuals' religiosity that motivated couples to establish, continue, and support their relationships (Mahoney, 2010; 2013). Mahoney (2010) offered three tiers of spiritual beliefs and practices that may help or harm family relations: (a) relationship with God, (b) relationship with family members invested with spiritual properties, and (c) relationship with a religious community. These three levels often may be tightly interwoven in such a way that when some family members experienced

disconnection or higher connection with God, their family members and their community could be affected. When one relationship was suffering or improving, then all the other relationships would suffer or improve. Scholars have documented that religious involvement and effects of religiosity independently from other positive relationship dynamics enhance couple's satisfaction by facilitating relationship virtues such as commitment, forgiveness, sacrifice, and sanctification of marriage (Day & Acock, 2013; Goodman & Dollahite, 2006; Mahoney, 2010; 2013). It is theorized that relationship with the Divine benefits couples via the four aforementioned relational virtues. For instance, couples' homogeneous religious involvement enhances marital relationships independently from other positive social factors such as, for example, abstinence from delinquent behavior, higher levels of "be good" attitude, weekly hearing messages of empowerment, receiving personalized prayers that make participants "feel good," availability of pastoral counseling, increased social support, allocation of church resources toward disadvantaged populations, and so on that are sometimes believed to be affected by church attendance (Wolfinger & Wilcox, 2008).

Finally, relational virtues are such relational processes that facilitate, maintain, and enrich relationships through the following: expressing and experiencing (a) commitment to each other to stay in the relationship, (b) forgiveness in events of the daily life, and through (c) sacrificing or putting aside personal wants for the sake of maintaining the relationship with the spouse. These three behavioral virtues are complemented by a positive attitudinal characteristic about the sanctification of marriage, which is a degree to which a person believes that God, the Divine, or supernatural power is present in their marriage or a sense of marriage being embedded with spiritual

properties (Mahoney, 1999). Sanctification is linked to the positive intentions in and for the relationship between the spouses (Mahoney, 2010; 2013). The following pages contain a description of each of the four components of the relational spirituality framework.

2.4.1 Commitment

Commitment has been conceptualized, researched since the 1970s, and found to be a meaningful predictor of marital stability in longitudinal research (Amato & DeBoer, 2001; Johnson, 1973; Rusbult, 1983). Adams and Jones (1997) indicated that commitment was a proper construct that explained the development and continuation of both functional and dysfunctional marital relationships. These authors empirically compared various concepts of commitment and identified its three primary dimensions: (a) an attraction component, which embodies personal dedication, devotion, and love; (b) a moral component, that includes one's sense of obligation, (religious or secular) integrity, or social responsibility; and (c) a constraining component, that consists of the fear of the social, financial, or legal consequences of ending the relationship (Adams & Jones). The commonalities running through the literature on commitment include an attraction component that was primarily associated with relationship satisfaction, desire for one another, and being recognized as a couple by others. The attraction was identified as either real or imagined characteristic of commitment and as a preventative of marital dissolution even when one partner's motivation to leave was high (e.g., abusive or co-dependent relationship; Adams & Jones). A moral aspect of commitment was derived from the partners' understanding that marriage has been an important social institution, which needed protection, or even an indication of their moral integrity or their level of religiousness (Adams & Jones). The role of religiousness in commitment is recognized in

scholarship and, therefore, is included in the model for couple's relational spirituality to assess the indirect pathway of commitment to couple's satisfaction.

Scholars document that religious involvement may facilitate personal commitment to marriage through practices such as mutual church attendance, weekly or daily devotional practices, prayer, or reading religious texts at home (Beach et al., 2008; Ellison et al., 2010; Olson, Goddard, & Marshall, 2013; Sullivan, 2001). Researchers found that the level of religiosity was positively associated with the levels of the following three factors: (a) moral commitment (feeling obligated by sensing that it is the *right* thing to do); (b) structural commitment (feeling societal constraints to stay in a marriage); and (c) personal commitment that is feeling an individual desire to stay in the marriage (Johnson, Caughlin, & Huston, 1999).

The religious influences affecting commitment are two-fold: (1) personal religious and spiritual beliefs, and (2) actualized extrinsic and intrinsic practices. Scholars found that couples' core opinions toward relationship commitment were grounded in lifestyles and behavioral choices regardless of religion (Ellison et al., 2010). For example, studying low-income couples, researchers found theological issues were less important than (a) mutual agreement about God's divine plan for their marriage, (b) joint prayer at home, and (c) mutual church attendance (Lichter & Carmalt, 2009; Olson et al., 2013). Therefore, identifying the degree to which religious and spiritual beliefs and convictions are present in one's life would not allow differentiating the presence of religion and individual religiosity from culturally expected religious behaviors (e.g., religious attendance of mothers with children). Thus, to conclude, religious beliefs and commitment in marriage necessitate a more holistic conceptualization and assessment of

religiosity than just an intellectual level of knowledge of religious or theological doctrines or religious attendance.

Nonetheless, the examples above present a body of literature which suggested that higher levels of religiosity positively connected to marital commitment, faithfulness, and willingness to stay in a marriage. Additionally, commitment is connected to the sacrificial attitude and behavior when one disregards self-interests for the sake of better relationships (Beach et al., 2008; Fincham & Beach, 2010b; Goodman, Dollahite, Marks, & Layton, 2013; Mahoney, 2010; 2013), as discussed in the next topic on “sacrifice.” Commitment and sacrifice of self for the sake of the relationship are interrelated, and both are addressed in this study.

2.4.2 Sacrifice

The sacrifice in a marital or committed relationship is an integral part of what love means to a couple. Scholars define sacrifice as a voluntary action of placing higher interest on the quality of the relationship rather than on the self-interest gained from the relationship; by this means, the couple’s satisfaction is strengthened (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Stanley et al., 2006; Whitton, Stanley, & Markman, 2002). Fincham et al. (2007) suggest that sacrifice, as a construct, is one of the mechanisms which reinforces relationship satisfaction as the couple forms their own couple identity.

Next, a sacrificial act may be understood as a symbolic reflection of the mutual bond that facilitates reciprocating behavior and trust. Such an act positively affects a couple’s satisfaction (Wieselquist, Rusbult, Foster, & Agnew, 1999). Whitton et al. (2002) suggest that the costs of sacrificial behavior are substituted with a new meaning that reflects the idea of the potential for a more positive mutual relationship. Therefore,

this symbolic meaning of the positive future benefit reinforces the affective bond, contributes to higher couple's satisfaction, and thus provides a positive benefit rather than a negative cost (Amato, 2007; Whitton et al., 2002). Because sacrifice is a concept that closely relates to religion and spirituality and because limited research analyzing this link is currently available, this project aims to verify and understand how much sacrifice mediates the relationship between the centrality of religion and couple's satisfaction in marital relationships when other relational virtues are taken into consideration.

2.4.3 Forgiveness

Forgiveness is a positive dimension of the relationship, but it is more than just a positive transaction between husband and wife. Forgiveness is an individual human characteristic that enhances the dyadic relationship and is classified as a self-repairing relationship process that increases the levels of a couple's satisfaction (Fincham, 2000; McCullough, Worthington, & Rachel, 1997). Fincham and colleagues (2007) suggest that forgiveness involves a motivational transformation to forgive that functions as a relationship repair process between the spouses. This change in attitude toward the offender is a distinctly different process from other positive relational processes, such as commitment or sacrifice, and as such forgiveness is a valid construct for further investigation of how forgiveness is connected to a couple's satisfaction (Fincham, 2000; McCullough et al., 1997).

In a committed relationship, forgiveness functions as a reciprocal process that begins with (a) the exchange of feelings being violated; (b) an absence of sympathy, affection, or trust; and (c) resentment toward the wrongdoer (Fincham, 2000). When a couple loses relationship closeness due to hurt feelings, wrongdoing, or unjust behavior

and yet the offender with empathy and rumination offers an apology, then the offended person may be willing to forgive. Having been lovingly offered an apology, the desire for revenge lowers, responses are less angry, and the processes of forgiveness may be initiated (McCulloch et al., 1998).

Additionally, the literature describes forgiveness as a decision to let go of anger, resentment, or the desire to punish someone (Neufeldt & Sparks, 2003) and return to friendly relations with the offender. Forgiveness is a result of an intentional and voluntary process to deliberately dismiss a motivation to retaliate, to “maintain estrangement from an offender despite their action,” or to seek vengeance on or avoid the offender (American Psychological Association, 2006, p. 5). Partners substitute non-forgiveness with forgiveness by adhering to constructive thought processes (e.g., by recognizing that the wrongdoer is also, like them, an imperfect human) and by maintaining sympathetic emotions (e.g., compassion, empathy, mercy; Gordon, Baucom, & Snyder, 2005). Such empathetic forgiveness leads to letting go of negative emotions toward the offender and “replacing the negative emotions with positive attitudes, including compassion and benevolence” (APA, 2006, p. 5).

Next, couples, scientists, and therapists recognize that forgiveness is a critical component in repairing, restoring, and reconciling relationships (Fincham, Hall, & Beach, 2005). In fact, scholars indicate that forgiveness is linked to two dynamics within a relationship; specifically, forgiveness not only reduces negativism but also increases positivism within the couple (Fincham, 2000; Fincham, 2009; Fincham et al., 2006). These findings suggest that forgiveness is a powerful repair process that can explain much of the variability in couple’s satisfaction.

However, scholars also highlight that forgiveness, as a stand-alone construct, does not necessarily lead to a restoration of the relationship; forgiveness and reconciliation are two different yet adjoined processes. Reconciliation can happen and is desired as an inseparable continuation of forgiveness in marriage, but the voluntary reduction of avoidance, revenge, and negative emotions does not always necessitate or lead to behavioral change and reinstatement of the broken relationship. For instance, a sexual assault victim might forgive the offender but avoid the relationship: forgiveness does not require reconciliation of the victim and offender.

Lastly, in this dissertation, forgiveness was conceptualized as a dispositional voluntary propensity to forgive. Forgiving means releasing negative thoughts, emotions, and motivations to take vengeance on the offender until the lack of forgiveness is resolved or substantially reduced, and the offended person accepts the offender's humanness, flaws, and failures (Davis et al., 2015; Fincham & Beach, 2002). Although forgiveness in a committed relationship needs to include the dyadic component on the part of the offender who empathically and reflectively may offer an apology to achieve reconciliation, forgiveness could be a one-sided process that does not necessarily lead to reconciliation (Worthington, 2006).

The tendency among religious groups to forgive may be amplified by the doctrinal teachings—in Christianity, for example—that stress an imperative psychological process of forgiving others if one expects to be forgiven. In fact, researchers have found that spouses who consider their marriage as a sacred commitment filled with divine properties can be more willing to forgive and reconcile, which can lead to lasting positive changes (King, 2003; Worthington et al., 2015). Therefore, in addition to the theoretical proposition of a

relational spirituality framework, empirical evidence justifies the inclusion of forgiveness in the model for analyses. Forgiveness is reflective of the couples' sacred meaning of marriage when religion is involved. The next and last virtue of the relational spirituality framework—sanctification of marriage—shows a special meaning that spiritually committed spouses may put into the marriage.

2.4.4 Sanctification of Marriage

Sanctification of marriage (hereafter referred as sanctification) is a meaningful symbolic awareness of what marriage represents and how it functions. Sanctification is a self-regulatory process through which a person views marriage as embedded in the Divine, and thus contains a sacred meaning, significance, and set of spiritual properties (Kusner et al., 2014). Consequently, spouses perceive their marriage to possess manifestations of the transcendent nature of the Divine that allows the Divine's transcendent aspects to connect to the couple's relationship (Mahoney, 2010; Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). The concept of sanctification holds that the marriage is endowed with sacred meaning, yet the definition of sanctification differs among various diverse groups across race, ethnicity, sex, socioeconomic status, and so on (Hodge, 2013). For instance, some scholars suggest that Americans view their marriages as possessing sacred qualities—such as “holy,” “blessed,” or “sacred”—that are associated with a non-theistic aspect of the sanctification (that is, sanctification with no direct connection to a specific God). Researchers found that these individuals with non-theistic attitude toward sanctification manifest high efforts to maintain their relationships, such as being more willing to forgive and reconcile (King, 2003; Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). Other researchers indicated that many Americans hold a theistic view of the sanctification, which has been embedded with the daily presence of a

higher power; thus, such a marriage is filled with a manifestation of God to some degree (Ellison, Henderson, Glenn, & Harkrider, 2011). Regardless of the nontheistic or theistic definition, conceptually individuals consider their marriage to be connected to the Divine being, power, or nature that possesses certain qualities that humans do not.

For example, individual's concepts of the Divine and their understanding of the Divine's transcendent nature may vary and, therefore, change individual's perception of how sanctification contributes to or what it brings to their marriage. However, homogeneity in attitudes toward sanctification is positively connected to relationship satisfaction (DeMaris et al., 2010; Ellison et al., 2011; Kusner et al., 2014; Lichter & Carmalt, 2009; Mahoney et al., 1999; Wolfinger & Wilcox, 2008). Scholars suggested that people's perception of marriage as a sacred institution robustly and positively contributed to relationship functioning (e.g., productive friendliness, communication, and fondness) and was helping them avoid aggressive behavior during angry arguments even after controlling for couples' love and positive communication skills (Kusner et al.).

Scholars have given attention to the study of sanctification (e.g., DeMaris, et al., 2010; Ellison et al., 2011; Goodman & Dollahite, 2006; Kusner et al., 2014; Mahoney, 2010, 2013) and provided impressive results. For instance, Mahoney et al. (1999) discovered that after controlling for demographic, individual religiousness, and religiousness homogamy variables, the individual attitudes toward sanctification still explained a large proportion of variance in individual marital adjustment ($R^2_{\text{change}} = 44\%$ for wives and 47% for husbands). This finding suggested that the sanctification was a relevant and meaningful concept that was positively and strongly associated with their satisfaction in marriage (Mahoney et al.).

Additionally, Marsh and Dallos (2000) in their qualitative work on motivation for problem-solving in marriage, discovered how each partner turns to the Divine (in prayer), or to their spiritual mentor, or reflects on the spiritual beliefs about marriage. These positive behaviors are a function of the sanctification. For this dissertation, the sanctification was defined as a degree to which one believed the Divine has been present in the marriage and has helped their marriage to possess Divine properties. For instance, couples who score higher on the sanctification were more likely to view their marriage as holy, heavenly, spiritual, religious, mysterious, everlasting, and blessed (Kusner et al., 2014; Mahoney et al., 1999). Sanctification and religiosity seem to relate but they are different concepts; the following concepts were used in this study.

2.5 Centrality of Religiosity

The primary emphasis of this dissertation is on the positive processes in the relationship between spouses—relational virtues—that are connected to individual religiosity; therefore, a review of religion or religiosity is plausible. Religiosity as a phenomenon of its own incorporates cognitions, feelings, intrinsic and extrinsic practices, and experiences one engages or expresses in daily life (Huber & Huber, 2013). To be sufficiently informative for the assessment of relational processes between spouses, this dissertation was consistent with an integrative paradigm offered by Pargament et al. (2013) to capture such an extraordinarily complex and multifacet phenomenon as religiosity. Pargament et al. stated that the study of religion and religiosity as applied to family relations did not agree on a universal definition of religion or spirituality; they did not offer a unified methodological approach for the assessment of religion and individual religiosity in peoples' lives. Current knowledge strongly suggests that religion and individual religiosity

is one of the demographic predictor variables that play a tremendous role in couples' relationships (Mahoney et al., 2001; Larson & Olson, 2004; Olson et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the expression of religiousness is multifaceted (Pargament et al., 2013), as it can bring many good benefits to an individual, the family, community, and society. Conceptually, in this dissertation religiosity was operationalized through five theoretically identified core facets of religion's presence in an individual's life, such as (a) private and public religious practices; (b) mystical, spiritual, and transcendent experiences; (c) intellectual awareness or interest, and (d) ideological importance, salience, or intensity of religious teachings following the work described by Huber and Huber (2012) who borrowed their theoretical constructs from the five-decade process of sharpening theoretical and practical approaches and tools for conceptualization and analysis of religion's role in the lives of individuals and their families.

First, the concepts of private and public religious experiences were first introduced by Allport's (1950) work and had been well established in scholarship. Next, the mysticism and similar spiritual and transcendent experiences have been in the center of what religions offer individuals as an integral part of belonging to a religious tradition (Hick, 1989; Kopeikin, 2017). Every religion offers engagement in transcendent experiences with the Divine that may be witnessed through direct knowledge, religious emotion, or another type of the encounter with the Divine. Psychologists began to study mysticism from the very beginning of the discipline (Hood & Francis, 2013). History of religions is full of such examples that strongly suggest a distinct human-Divine interaction has been present and revealed through specific religious experiences.

Next, the intellectual sphere of salience or intensity in one's life referred to the individual's interest in or knowledge of information about theological teachings or current religious discourse in the media, expecting that if religion plays a central role in their lives, such people would be more interested in or knowledgeable of religious topics. Intellectual religiosity refers only to the intellectual activities but not to theological or religious beliefs, the latter was identified as the components of an ideological layer of the centrality of religiosity (Huber & Huber, 2012). Both, intellectual and ideological interests, knowledge, or awareness refer to the psychological dimension of the centrality of religion, such as thoughts, whereas the theorized area of the religious experiences refers to the intensity, salience, or importance of feelings, perceptions, and emotions of encounters between human and Divine. These five core areas of the centrality of religiosity in one's life fit well into the holistic theorizing, modeling, and assessment of intrapersonal influences of religion in one's life. Researchers used centrality of religiosity in the studies of religiosity as a construct with several theoretically established domains and applied it in 22 countries using 20 languages (Huber & Krech, 2008).

In addition to the multifaceted nature of religiosity, religion is not practiced in isolation but in various groups. The fundamental group of any society and the one that fosters or discourages practicing spiritual beliefs is the family. It may be the family of origin, the person's own family, extended family, or the religious community, which, in the absence of immediate family, may have assumed most of the family's social functions, such as celebrations of events, special dates and achievements, and various kinds of support during the hardships of life. Developmental, familial, communal, social, and cultural contexts constitute the multifaceted nature of religion in the population (Pargament et al.,

2013). These levels of influence shape the nature of personal religiousness, beliefs, convictions, rituals, understandings, experiences, and knowledge of religion.

Controversially, religion was historically used to bring inequality and powerlessness, and at times harm, abuse, and destruction (Pargament et al., 2013). With regard to an extreme case of relational inequality such as violence, it has to be emphasized that evidence point out to the fact that infrequent attendance of religious services has been associated with higher levels of reported domestic violence in marital, cohabiting, or dating relationships (Ellison & Anderson, 2001; Schreck, Burek, & Clark-Miller, 2007). Nonetheless, religiosity may be positively connected to unequal functioning (relational equality) and as such appear to be a controversial parameter that affects relational equality, which in turn, is associated with couple's satisfaction with mixed reports, thus, warranting special attention.

2.6 Relational Equality

2.6.1 Equality in a Religious Marriage

Historically, religion has been associated with a vertical hierarchical power distribution between the husband and wife by reinforcing a traditional role division at home and supporting a decision-making hierarchy favoring the husband (Edgell & Docka, 2007; Wilcox, 2004; 2006). However, a recent view of Christianity challenges the practice of authoritarian husbands making independent decisions without obtaining spousal consent (e.g., Bartkowski, 2001) because such patriarchal ideology violates a fundamental Christian principle of unity between husband and wife: their oneness and love for one another (Grenz & Kjesbo, 2010; Haas, 1995). Additionally, scholars

studying the religiously driven gender hierarchy suggest that conservative Christians are still functioning at home in a manner that supports partnership, mutuality, and egalitarianism between husband and wife (Brasher, 1998; Gallagher, 2004).

In contrast, researchers also describe that the majority of marriages in America as still traditional (unequal) in their household roles among heterosexual couples due to their conservative religious subcultures (Mahoney, 2010). Although people perceive formalized religious organizations to support this so-called male-over-female hierarchical structure, recent studies assessing religiously driven inequality between husband and wife failed to demonstrate a negative relationship between religiosity and equality among very religious couples (Day & Acock, 2013; DeMaris et al., 2010; Denton, 2004; Sigalow, Shain, & Bergey, 2012). Denton examined the relationships among gender ideology, religious identity, and marital decision-making indicated no meaningful or statistical difference in the decision-making process among couples who hold, on the one hand, conservative and traditional gender-role ideology and, on the other hand, couples who were more theologically liberal or shared an egalitarian ideology. Therefore, relational equality in the home appears to still be an ambiguous relationship process that necessitates clarification, definition, and further investigation in scholarship on couple's satisfaction.

2.6.2 Definitions and Evaluations of Relational Equality

Defining equality varies widely based on the theoretical approach to what equality in the relationship means and how it functions between husband and wife. The issue of equality between spouses has been widely researched, yet scholars have not come to a unified understanding of what equality between husband and wife represents nor how it should be conceptualized and measured. For instance, contemporary social exchange

theory suggests that individuals in their relationships maximize rewards, minimize their costs, and maintain a level of fairness and equity in the distribution of rewards and costs within the couple (Sabatelli & Shehan, 2009). The equity theory when applied to the couple relationship suggests that the perception of fairness for their own and their spouse's contribution to the household roles is positively associated with the couple's satisfaction when equal division and amount of efforts and time is given from each spouse (Adams, 1965; Greenstein, 1996; Wilcox & Nock, 2006). Kelly and Thibaut's (1978) interdependence theory suggested that maximization of rewards in mutual reliance on each other was assessed continuously over against one's relationship expectations and available alternatives. Likewise, the relational processes were centered around self-interested motivation to make choices based on maximizing the expected rewards over against personal costs in the interpersonal relationship processes (Emerson, 1976, Nye, 1979; Sabatelli & Shehan, 2009). In such conceptualization, a person with lower self-interest obtains a higher power in the relationship and can gain greater rewards with fewer costs.

Other scholars suggested that relationship equality conceptually referred to three areas of relationship: bases, processes, and outcomes (Cromwell & Olson, 1975). Equality bases include resources and personality characteristics one brings to the relationship (e.g., attractiveness, or control via psychological or physical aggression). Equality processes are interpersonal attitudes, behaviors, and exchanges used to gain influence in the relationships. Equality outcomes describe the decision-making end-result: who in the relationship may act independently, dominate in the relationship, pursue their own vital goals, and make decisions that affect the other spouse, their marriage, and the whole family (Cromwell & Olson; Ball, Cowan, & Cowan, 1995). Instead, researchers define relationship equality as

the ability to psychologically dominate in the relationship, manipulate resources, instill penalties, and influence the behavior of the partner without consequences of the relationship dissolution (Anderson & Berdahl, 2002; Ball et al., 1995; Lindahl, Malik, Kaczynski, & Simons, 2004). Assessment of relationship processes assumes that the equality in the relationship generates interaction during prioritizing and decision making in the allocation of limited resources.

Furthermore, Stacey (1993) suggests that an entirely egalitarian marriage is not possible in the present unequal social, political, economic, and sexual system, and indicates that the lifelong dyadic commitment may be grounded in systemic forms of inequality. In addition to macrostructures that promote inequality in society, psychologists suggest that men and women may not be equally affected by the effect of relational inequality (DeMaris et al., 2010). For example, Ball et al. (1995) found that in solving marital issues, women and men differ in problem-solving aspects when they are making decisions. Researchers stated that women possessed a higher tolerance for household labor division discrepancies, while men controlled the content and largely determined the outcome of relational disputes (Ball et al.).

Besides, equality is an arbitrary construct, and it may not be static or fixed but fluid and changeable with the varying levels of couple's satisfaction at different stages of family life as couples age. For example, researchers reported that compared to egalitarian marriages, traditional couples were more likely to avoid conflict over household labor and more likely experienced higher couple's satisfaction when they were younger, in their first marriage, and were dual-earner couples (Kluwer, 2010). However, older couples (e.g., when a husband was 28 or older) reported higher levels of couple's

satisfaction when they had a more egalitarian marriage (Helms-Erikson, 2001). The varying nature of equality's conceptualization based on the household roles lacks rigor and explanatory power because couples distribute home tasks in various ways, and the primary factor is a degree to which they perceive the distribution to be fair.

Therefore, the use of equity theory seemed to be less appropriate, thus, in this dissertation, relational equality in marriage was defined as the perception of equality between partners in regulating the behavior of one another, installing penalties, extending rewards, and the ability of one spouse to make decisions that affect both spouses without the prior consent of another spouse. This conceptualization followed the works of Ball et al. (1995); Crosbie-Burnett, and Giles-Sims (1991); Day and Acock (2013); and Lindhal, Malik, Kaczynski, and Simons (2004). Relational equality plays a central role in the spousal relationship that regulates one another's behavior. This dissertation incorporated equality as a variable, which was an important parameter that researchers found often to favor men rather than women in "traditional" or religious couples' relationships. As the United States becomes less religious (Lipka, 2015), the following question arises: Would equality play a similar or a different role in couple's satisfaction in cultures other than North American? For instance, compared to the American families, Russian families are more traditional in their approaches to relational equality (Shneider, 2000) and, therefore, cultural variations may be connected differently to relational equality as well as the relational virtues that in turn would be linked to couple's satisfaction in a different way. To better situate a reader in the Russian context, the next section offers a summary on Russian living in the nexus of historical time and place, including the country's religious context.

2.7 Cross-Cultural Context: Russia

Limited studies have been conducted to assess the connection between relationship processes and the centrality of religion following the relational spirituality framework in the United States, and even fewer studies were performed in Russia. The ongoing salience of spirituality and religion that affect human behavior specifically, and perhaps differently, in the U.S. and Russia is of special interest to this author and has established a focal point for this dissertation. Conducting research in Russia, a culture wherein this framework has not previously been studied, offers an opportunity to test the universality of relational spirituality as well as the centrality of religion and couple's satisfaction. That is, providing evidence for a full or partial similarity in the functions of (a) couple's relational spirituality, (b) centrality of religion, and (c) couple's satisfaction in another culture which uses a different language system and life philosophy, would perhaps demonstrate whether these three phenomena are universal or culture-specific.

Future researchers need to apply the relational spirituality framework in other cultures to test the framework's generalizability across cultures where religion and spirituality may be integrated into people's lives differently compared to the American families. For example, currently, Russians consider themselves very spiritual, which may be due to a long period of atheism between the 1920s and 1990s. During this period, religion was illegal over the course of three generations during which time Russia was an atheistic state with up to 80% of the population in the country being atheists (Newsland, 2013 August). Thus, Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, and all other religious and spiritual followers have been persecuted: clergy have been killed or imprisoned; temples, mosques, and other religious buildings have been destroyed or turned into storage, cinemas, or governmental facilities. Consequently, a wave of religious renaissance took

place in the 1990s after U.S.S.R. opened the freedom of religion (October 1990). From the 1990s to 2010s, the percentage of atheists declined, and the number of religious and spiritual individuals has dramatically increased up to 85.5% (Levada-Center, 2012). Between 2010 and 2012, religiousness in Russia has stabilized at the level of 85.5%, including 74% Russian Orthodox Christians, 7% followers of Islam, and 14.5% proclaimed atheists; the margin of error was 3.4% in a national probability sample survey (Levada-Center).

In the 2010s, Russia continues as a highly religious country at a similar level as the U.S., but Russians' religiosity is distinct from the Western rationally-driven approach to the Divine. For example, a complex and seldom understood phenomenon of a "Russian soul" may be described as a combination of the inner mystical—not religious—search for significance with a melancholic attitude toward the outcome, which is entirely entrusted to fate, luck, and Providence (Allik et al., 2011). This folk fate-luck-providential attitude is amplified by the Russian Orthodox liturgical practices that foster a similar emphasis on the mystical, transcendent reality that differentiates Orthodox spirituality from the Catholic and Protestant spirituality through the Orthodox heavy theological emphasis on the mystical work of the Divine in human lives (Land, 2010). The term *mysticism* is used quite often in the Russian Orthodox teachings; it is a derivative from the Greek adjective *μυστικός* (arcane, secret), and means longing for an encounter with God and the experience of such encounter (Alfeev, 1998). This type of transcendence in daily life is a common practice among Christians in Russia; the mysticism has been fostered in the Russian literature (e.g., fairy tales), common sayings, music, art, and beliefs in superstition (Figes, 2003).

Nonetheless, when addressing religiousness and spirituality in Russia, researchers follow a Western approach by surveying religious attendance or self-identified spirituality; conversely, Russian Orthodox Christians do not consider weekly church attendance as a sign of higher religiousness or spirituality. They instead foster the inward attitude toward the Divine and develop their personal spiritual qualities such as reverence to the Orthodox Clergy, temples, items of worship (e.g., icons), writings of the Holy Fathers, and prayer-book (*molitvoslov*) (Ziegler, 2008).

Another factor of religious life that is different between the two countries is the fact that Russian freedom of religion has been recently available during only one generation, while the U.S. has exercised freedom of religion from its foundation in the 18th century. The fresh and thus vibrant religious experiences in the Russian population may be a meaningful factor that could be linked to the couple's satisfaction similarly to that in the U.S. Nonetheless, this is a mere speculation until research can provide concrete evidence of how couple's satisfaction, relational spirituality, and centrality of religion function in Russian marriages and families.

2.7.1 Family Research in Russia; a Brief Historic Background

Throughout its history, Russian people have been under oppressive regimes of tsars, Russian Orthodox Church, Communists, yet in contemporary *sovereign democracy* (Matvienko, 2008), Russian people now live with maximum freedoms for the longest time in the history of the country. These shifts have had concomitant changes in the definition of relationships, marriage, and family. Thus, family research in Russia can be broadly divided into three large chronological stages: (a) evolution, before 1917; (b) revolution, between 1917 and 1990; and (c) reformation, after 1990 (Antonov & Medkov, 1996).

Next, Russian scientists began to study family relations in the middle of the 19th century. However, after the Communist revolution in 1917, the psychology and other disciplines were declared as false-sciences that were not compatible with Marxist-Leninist philosophy, and officially banned in the U.S.S.R.; until the 1960s, it was illegal to study psychology or psychiatry (Silyaeva, 2005). Only when Nikita S. Khrushchev came into power in early 1960, social sciences were allowed as legitimate fields of science, and a shift to gradually promote theoretical, methodological, and empirical social sciences research had taken place (Novikova, 2006). Yet, the ideological pressure from the Communist Party prevented the majority of research results from official publication (Popova, 1997). Likewise, due to a long history of rejecting psychology as a science, those studying psychology still had to acquire a special authorization from the U.S.S.R. government (Umrikhin, 1991). As a result, social research data is scant before 1970 because the Communist regime suppressed the development of empirical research and limited publications in the Russian social sciences up to the end of the 1980s.

In 1991, the freedom of social research, including that on the family, had become available in all the sciences because the U.S.S.R. with its entire control machine ceased to exist. However, the hardships had shifted from ideological to economic in nature: the socio-economical upheaval of the 1990s caused social scientists to earn their living by either teaching, publishing popular books, or counseling; social research was severely neglected (Druzhinin, 2012) because economic conditions in the 1990s in Russia were similar to those of the collapse in the 1930s in the U.S. With the growth of Russian economy in the 2000s, a remnant of researchers who remained in sciences began to produce more social sciences studies, leading to the establishment of new research

journals. Nonetheless, Russian social researchers limit their field studies to incomplete theoretical frameworks, descriptive statistics, and demographic variables without hypotheses' testing (e.g., Antonov, 1998; Sinenlinkov, 2015). The lack of rigor and scarcity of quantitative studies addressing relationship processes is a consequence of the historical time and place in which Russian social scientists find themselves in the 2010s.

Due to these historical limitations, family science in Russia is not considered as a field of science, but as a subfield of psychology, pedagogy, demography, or sociology, and is referred to as the microsociology (Antonov, 1998). Additionally, a heavy dependence of the Russian research on the governmental funding presents challenges to the development of the social science research beyond the interest of the funding sources. Nonetheless, the vast gaps in family science research offer enormous opportunities for improvement and meaningful contribution to the field that is an additional motivation and potential for a substantial contribution of this dissertation project.

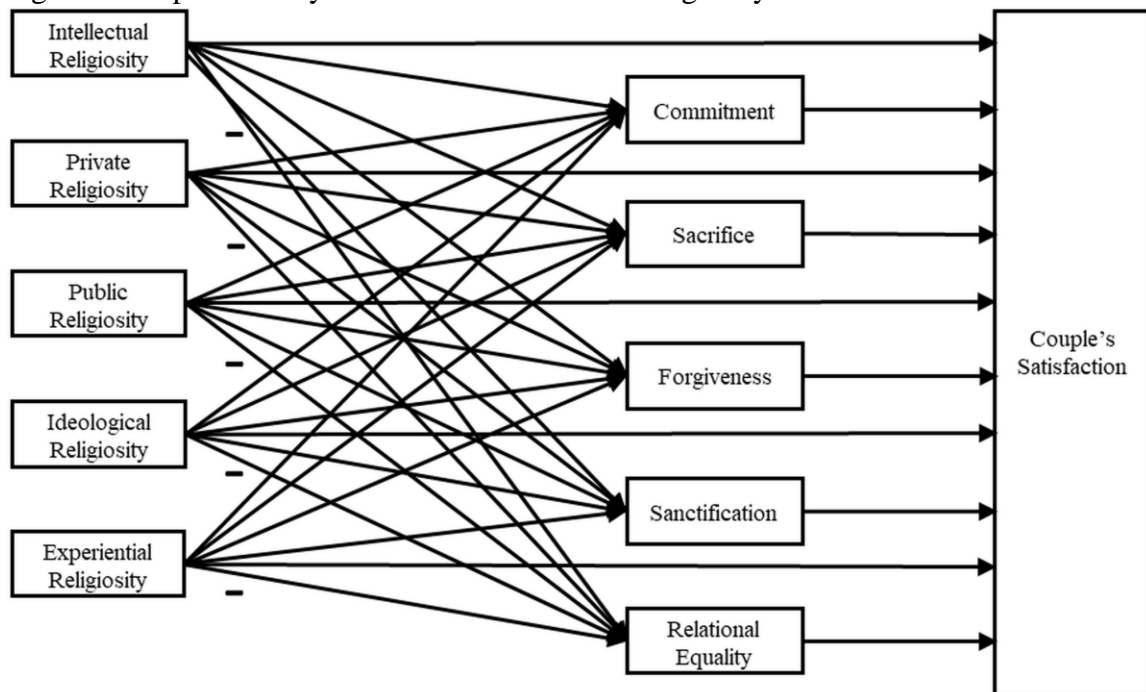
2.8 Analytical Model

Several studies have already found that virtues were positively connected to couple's satisfaction (Goodman, Dollahite, Marks, & Layton, 2013; Mitchell, Edwards, Hunt, & Poelstra, 2015; Stafford, David, & McPherson, 2014) and some used relational spirituality framework with inclusion of relational equality (Day & Acock, 2013; Mahoney & Cano, 2014). To test the framework in this dissertation I incorporated relational virtues—commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, and sanctification—and relational equality as mediators between the centrality of religiosity and couple's satisfaction. Figure 2 contains the proposed analytical model that suggests positive mediation pathways from religiosity's domains through relational virtues—commitment, sacrifice,

forgiveness, and sanctification—and a negative pathway toward relational equality marked with a negative sign.

Therefore, guided by the relational spirituality framework (Mahoney, 2010; 2013) and previous research (Day & Acock, 2013; Mahoney & Cano, 2014), this dissertation simultaneously evaluated the presence of five mediation pathways: the four relational virtues (as positive) and relational equality (as negative) toward couple's satisfaction across two cultures. This study further seeks to assess similarities and differences between and within cultures as well as between and within couples in each culture. Positive and negative pathways toward couple's satisfaction help to explain and enrich the understanding of the context for couple's relationship processes.

Figure 2 Proposed analytical model of relational religiosity.



2.8.1 Dyadic Conceptualization, Measurement, and Analysis

Conceptually, couple's satisfaction is a function of the dyadic relationship between spouses. Likewise, the relational processes of commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, sanctification, and relational equality are present only between people in close relationships, by which these processes depend upon the behaviors and attitudes of each person in the dyad. Nonetheless, scholars tend to conceptualize the relational variables as an individual variable and subsequently design, measure, and apply analytical approaches that assume an individual rather than a dyadic level of analysis. It is true that the individual conceptualization of experiences, feelings, attitudes, motivations, and actions are valid and yield essential results to further understand an individual and their functioning. However, the advancement of relationship science is difficult without accounting for the influences of the "partner" effect due to the spousal interaction or behaviors and attitudes that affect the first person, commonly addressed as the "actor" in the relationship with the "partner." For the same person, one's variable may influence another variable that can be either the effect from one's own score—the actor effect—or the effect from one's spouse—the partner effect (Kenny et al., 2006).

In such a complex study of the relationship as a dyadic couple's satisfaction, scholars generate a substantial amount of error variance when conceptualizing, measuring, and evaluating an inherently dyadic phenomenon without accounting for the partner's effect by sampling and analyzing couple's satisfaction on an individual level; that single-level analysis distorts the results and biases their analysis (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006). The individual level studies suggest that higher religiousness is strongly connected to higher couple's satisfaction; but how does the interdependence in couple's life contribute to this strong

connection of religiousness-to-couple's satisfaction? When the centrality of religion and the couple's satisfaction are measured from both members of the dyad, do results differ? Which member of the dyad (male or female) exhibits higher levels of individual religiousness? Which spouse's partner effect is greater if the partners' effects do, in fact, statistically significantly differ? It was suggested, for example, that the fathers' religious attendance (with or without wife) was positively connected to couple's satisfaction for both parents (Fincham & Beach, 2010), and that the father's religious attendance had a positive effect on the mother's relationship satisfaction. In contrast, the mother's attendance at religious events was not connected to the father's levels of marital satisfaction (Fincham & Beach).

These results come from the individual level studies; the gap in scholarship calls for dyadic studies analyzing the relationship satisfaction between and within partners of the couples. Hence, compared to the individual level, the dyadic design and analysis in the study of connections between religiosity and couple's satisfaction provides structural opportunity and statistical tools to account for spousal (partners') interdependence and evaluate between- and within-couple variations. Therefore, I applied dyadic conceptualization, measured and analyzed relationship between the centrality of religion and couples' satisfaction soliciting responses from both spouses in both cultures. Yet, when measuring the same variable in different samples, researchers have to make sure the tools they use function equally across groups; that issue is called measurement invariance testing and I turn to it next.

2.8.2 Measurement Invariance and Comparison Across Cultures and Sexes

An issue of measurement equivalence between cultures and sexes must be addressed. In this study, the cross-cultural and cross-sexual measurement invariance

presents a meaningful question because cultures may be connected to intimate relationship processes in different ways. Not only male and female views of the same intimate relationship may be different, but also the translation and adaptation of measuring instruments between cultures may produce additional (cross-cultural) error variance that—if not identified—may lead to biased results and spurious conclusions (Borsboom, 2006). Therefore, before any comparisons across groups, it is of the highest importance to establish evidence whether the bias in measurement is statistically significant to be able to compare scores measured by the instruments or compare and contrast the magnitudes of the effects found in analyses.

Measurement invariance (equivalence) is established within the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) framework and is described with a non-mathematical language by Gregorich (2006). Many researchers stop assessing factorial invariance after supporting the dimensionality of an instrument without realizing further how other types of factorial invariance may affect specific quantitative group comparison (Gregorich). The testing of the five different nested levels of measurement invariance provides support whether the factorial structure of a latent variable similar or different across groups by analyzing whether these levels of factorial invariance are supported entirely or in part (Toland, Kupzyk, & Bovaird, 2017). In short, these levels of measurement invariance consist of (a) dimensional, (b) configural, (c) metric (pattern), (d) strong factorial (or scalar), and (e) strict factorial invariance (Meredith, as cited in Gregorich, 2006). The (a) *dimensional* invariance means that the phenomena under study (the latent variable) in every group consist of the same (number and type of) factors; (b) the *configural* invariance shows the extent to which a given set of measured items are associated with the same factor(s)

across groups; (c) the *metric* (pattern) invariance supports the same meaning of factors, that is the factor loadings are equal across groups; the (d) *strong factorial* invariance provides grounds for unbiased estimates of cross-group mean comparisons; and (e) the *strict factorial* invariance facilitates an unbiased comparison of measured variances and covariances across groups (Toland et al., 2017). With this background in mind, this dissertation addressed the overarching research questions, each of which contained the relevant hypotheses for testing, as follows.

2.9 Research Questions

2.9.1 Research Question 1

How the relational religiosity model fit the data? That is, what are the pathways from intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity to the couple's satisfaction through the impact of the mediating variables of relational processes such as commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, sanctification, and relational equality?

2.9.1.1 Hypothesis 1.1.

The intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity are statistically connected to the couple's satisfaction through commitment for men and women.

2.9.1.2 Hypothesis 1.2.

The intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity are statistically connected to the couple's satisfaction through sacrifice for men and women.

2.9.1.3 Hypothesis 1.3.

The intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity are statistically connected to the couple's satisfaction through forgiveness for men and women.

2.9.1.4 Hypothesis 1.4.

The intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity are statistically connected to the couple's satisfaction through sanctification for men and women.

2.9.1.5 Hypothesis 1.5.

The intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity are statistically connected to the couple's satisfaction through relational equality for men and women in a negative way.

2.9.1.6 Hypothesis 1.6.

The intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity have statistical positive direct effects to couple's satisfaction for men and women.

2.9.2 Research question 2.

How the relational religiosity model fit the data in a Russian sample? That is, what are the pathways from intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity to the couple's satisfaction through the impact of the mediating variables such as commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, sanctification, and relational equality?

2.9.2.1 Hypothesis 2.1.

The intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity are statistically connected to the couple's satisfaction through commitment for Russian men and women.

2.9.2.2 Hypothesis 2.2.

The intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity are statistically connected to the couple's satisfaction through sacrifice for Russian men and women.

2.9.2.3 Hypothesis 2.3.

The intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity are statistically connected to the couple's satisfaction through forgiveness for Russian men and women.

2.9.2.4 Hypothesis 2.4.

The intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity are statistically connected to the couple's satisfaction through sanctification for Russian men and women.

2.9.2.5 Hypothesis 2.5.

The intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity are statistically connected to the couple's satisfaction through relational equality for Russian men and women in a negative way.

2.9.2.6 Hypothesis 2.6.

The intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity have a direct positive effect on couple's satisfaction for men and women in a Russian sample.

2.9.3 Research question 3

What are the interpersonal influences of the religiosity on the couple's satisfaction in couples?

2.9.3.1 Hypothesis 3.1.

Husbands' religiosity scores are statistically connected to their scores on couple's satisfaction in a positive way.

2.9.3.2 Hypothesis 3.2.

Wives' religiosity scores are statistically connected to their scores on couple's satisfaction in a positive way.

2.9.3.3 Hypothesis 3.3.

Wives' religiosity scores are statistically connected to their husbands' scores on couple's satisfaction in a positive way.

2.9.3.4 Hypothesis 3.4.

Husbands religiosity scores are statistically connected to their wives' score on couple's satisfaction in a positive way.

2.9.4 Research question 4

What are the interpersonal influences of the religiosity on the couple's satisfaction in couples from the Russian speaking culture?

2.9.4.1 Hypothesis 4.1.

Russian husbands' religiosity scores are statistically connected to their scores on couple's satisfaction in a positive way.

2.9.4.2 Hypothesis 4.2.

Russian wives' religiosity scores are statistically connected to their scores on couple's satisfaction in a positive way.

2.9.4.3 Hypothesis 4.3.

Russian wives' religiosity scores are statistically connected to their husbands' scores on couple's satisfaction in a positive way.

2.9.4.4 Hypothesis 4.4.

Russian husbands' religiosity scores are statistically connected to their wives' scores on couple's satisfaction in a positive way.

CHAPTER 3. METHOD

3.1 Data

3.1.1 Sampling Procedures

Institutional Review Board approved the current project (see Appendix 1); it was an online survey of couples and individuals who were at least 18 years of age and in a committed relationship for at least one year. The project lasted between 09/01/2016 and 12/31/2017, sampling from various occupational settings (e.g., education, social and professional networks, religious groups, etc.) through email, electronic mailing lists, social media, such as Facebook, Russian social network BKOHTAKTE (analogous to Facebook) and so on (Appendix 2 contains recruitment materials). In addition, a free recruitment and feasibility resource, ResearchMatch (www.researchmatch.org), yielded a large portion of English-speaking initial respondents (2,856). ResearchMatch used a variation of the Tailored Design Method (TDM; Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009; Stern, Bilgen, & Dillman, 2014) when recruiting English-speaking participants. The maximization of responses was due to a pre-contact and contact emails when recruiting participants. Additionally, when a respondent provided an email address for the spouse or partner, an email was sent to the spouse or partner inviting him or her to participate in the study. Respondents were asked to use a snowball method and invite potential participants to complete the survey online using their networks. As an incentive to complete the survey, the invitation text and cover letter stated that 10 electronic gift cards of \$30 each, two cards of \$200 each, and one card of \$300 were to be randomly distributed among participants who would leave their email addresses, which was kept confidential. The announcement contained further details that encouraged couples'

participation by increasing up to a total of five email's entries into the drawing for each spouse that resulted in 10 prize-drawings entries for each couple who would participate.

3.1.1.1 The American Sample.

The raw sample of 2,856 records in the English language was adjusted by excluding 693 empty responses, 52 responses from individuals in same-sex relations (40 lesbian and 12 gay men), and repetitive (15 double) entrances. When a double entrance appeared, the most informative or chronologically oldest entry was kept. The sample included 1,168 individuals (55.7%) who completed the survey without their spouse participating. Additionally, 928 (44.3%) American respondents and their spouses or partners also completed the survey; these “partnered individuals” constituted 464 American couples. The total American sample $N = 2,096$. The individuals were between 18 and 96 years of age ($M = 41.7$, $SD = 14.7$), mostly female (63.5%), married (71.2%), mostly well-educated with undergraduate degrees or higher (70.1%), ethnically self-identified as mostly White (84.3%). Table 1 contains detailed demographic data for the total American sample.

To answer the first research question, the selection procedures for a sample was as follows: 103 records that contained no information on numerous relationship measures were excluded from 2,096 responses. Additionally, the partnered individuals were randomly selected to determine who (either male or female participant) would be excluded from the sample of 464 couples to prevent data non-independence in the resulting sample. The resulting sample consisted of $n = 1,529$ individuals. To answer the third research question, the coupled respondents $n = 928$ were selected to test the hypotheses among 464 couples, because these research questions referred to the effects of interrelatedness between the spouses, thus necessitating dyadic data analysis.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of the Total American Sample (N = 2,096).

Characteristic	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	765	36.5
Female	1331	63.5
Race/Ethnicity ^a		
White	1681	80.2
Black	104	5.0
Asian	57	2.7
Hispanic/Latino	54	2.6
Other backgrounds	59	2.8
Married status		
Married	1471	70.2
Cohabiting	534	25.5
Living apart together or distant relationship	82	3.9
Other	9	0.4
Highest educational level completed		
No high school diploma	11	0.5
High school diploma but no Bachelor's degree	618	29.5
Bachelor's degree	710	33.9
Master's degree	578	27.6
Doctoral degree and above	179	8.5
Annual income (\$) ^b		
1–12,000	375	17.9
12,001–24,000	368	17.6
24,001–36,000	373	17.8
36,001–48,000	295	14.1
48,001–60,000	177	8.4
60,001–72,000	110	5.2
72,001–999,999	369	17.6
Religiosity ^c		
Very religious	935	44.6
Religious	259	12.4
Slightly religious	225	10.7
Not very much religious	281	19.8
Not at all religious	274	13.1

Note: Totals of percentages are not 100 for all characteristic because of rounding.

^aMissing 141 responses (6.7%). ^bMissing 29 (1.4%). ^cMissing 122 responses (5.8%).

3.1.1.2 The Russian Sample.

The Russian raw sample of 1,388 records was adjusted by excluding 432 empty responses and 21 repeated or duplicate responses, resulting in a sample of $n = 935$. The

Russian sample consisted of respondents between 19 and 72 years of age ($M = 38.8$, $SD = 10.1$) mostly female (64.7%), married (92.4%), well-educated with undergraduate degrees or higher (65.0%), ethnically self-identified as ethnic Russians (59.4%), 25.5% of ethnic Ukrainians, 3.0% Armenians, 2.5% Tatars, and other ethnicities constituted 9.6% of respondents. Table 2 contains detailed data for the total Russian sample.

To answer the second research question, 233 records with no information on the relationship measures, 40 responses from same-sex individuals, and four double entries were excluded from the Russian total sample of 935. Additionally, 129 partnered individuals were randomly selected to be excluded from the sample (separated from their spouse to prevent data non-independence), resulting in the sample of $n = 529$ Russian-speaking individuals. To answer the last research question, the records of Russian-speaking 129 couples, $n = 258$ respondents, were included.

A decision about exclusion of same-sex couples was based on initial purpose to research heterosexual couples, however, issues related to inability to differentiate between same-sex partners (male or female) roles in dyadic analysis of distinguishable dyads have also contributed to the decision of researching heterosexual couples to be consistent with the literature on couples' research. Finally, same-sex couples represent a valuable population for further research inquiries that is statistically different at the dyadic level of analysis.

3.2 Measures

3.2.1 Centrality of Religiosity

This study utilized the 15-item Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS-15) to record the individual's responses on a 5-point ordinal scale in five domains of individual

Table 2 Demographic Characteristics of the Total Russian Sample (N = 935).

Characteristic	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	330	35.3
Female	605	64.7
Ethnicity ^a		
Russian	449	48.0
Ukrainian	184	19.7
Armenian	23	2.5
Tatar	22	2.4
Belarus	18	1.9
Arab	11	1.2
Asian	9	1.0
Jewish	9	1.0
Other 13 racial backgrounds	29	3.1
Relationship status		
Married	859	91.9
Cohabiting	50	5.3
Living apart together or in distance	18	1.9
Other	8	0.9
Highest educational level completed		
No high school diploma	12	1.3
High school diploma and some college	316	33.8
Bachelor's or specialist degree	397	42.5
Master's degree	183	19.6
Doctoral degree and above	27	2.9
Annual income ^b (\$) ^c		
1–3,193	345	38.0
3,194–5,321	160	17.6
5,322–8,514	148	16.3
8,515–11,707	85	9.4
11,708–14,900	46	5.1
14,901–18,092	23	2.5
18,093–21,285	31	3.4
21,286–999,999	69	7.6
Religiosity ^d		
Very religious	560	62.3
Religious	235	26.1
Slightly religious	49	5.5
Not very much religious	35	3.9
Not at all religious	20	2.2

Note: Missing 181 response (19.4%). ^bThe exchange rate of 56,3779 rubles per dollar on 03/31/17 was used to report dollar amounts. ^cMissing 28 responses (3.0%). ^dMissing 89 responses (9.5%).

religiosity, namely (a) public practice, (b) private practice, (c) religious experience, (d) ideology or beliefs, and (e) the intellectual or knowledge domains (Huber & Huber, 2012). The frequencies of religious behaviors or interest to religious and spiritual topics was recorded on a 5-point ordinal scale: *never* (1); *a few times a year/less often than a few times a year* (2); *once a week or one or three times a month* (3); *more than once a week/one or three times a month* (4); and *several or once a day/more than once or once a week* (5). Responses to questions concerning ideology, such as, *To what extent do you believe that God or something Divine exists?* and about intellectual dimension, for example, *How interested are you in learning more about religious topics?* were recorded on a 5-point ordinal scale such as *not at all/never* (1), *not very much/rarely* (2), *moderately/occasionally* (3), *quite a bit/often* (4), *very much so/very often* (5). The higher scores indicated a higher level of religiosity construct system of a respondent. The construct validity of the CRS-15 has been established empirically (Huber & Krech, 2008). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability for the original CRS-15 indicated a high internal consistency of items and ranged from .80 to .93 (.85–.95 in the present study) for the individual domains of public and private practice, religious experience, ideology, and intellectual religiosity, and from .92 to .96 for the whole CRS-15 scale in the study of Huber and Huber (.97–.98 in the present study). The CRS-15 score was calculated as a mean average score; the normed values for the American sample were $M = 3.92$, $SD = 0.99$ (Huber & Huber), in the current American sample the values for male/female respondents were $M = 3.02/3.15$, $SD = 1.34/1.29$. Appendix 3 contains items for CRS-15 in English and Russian.

3.2.1.1 Russian Centrality of Religiosity.

The validation of the Russian version of the Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS-15R) has been accomplished via European Values Study, World Values Survey, European Social Survey, International Social Survey Program (ISSP Research Group 2016; Huber, & Huber, 2012). The CRS-15R score was calculated as a mean average score; the normed values for the Russian language $M = 2.45$, $SD = 0.96$ (Cronbach's alpha was not reported) (Huber & Huber). In the current sample the values for the CRS-15R were $M = 3.96$, $SD = 1.09$, and Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability was in between .86–.95.

3.2.2 Commitment

In this project, the measure of commitment was taken from the investment model scale and used the 7-item subscale of commitment (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). Respondents indicated their level of agreement on a 9-point ordinal scale from *completely disagree* (0) to *completely agree* (8) to the five positive statements and two inverted (negative) statements on commitment to the relationship with their partner, for instance, *I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner*, *I would not feel very upset if our relationship were to end in the near future*, and *I am oriented toward the long-term future of my relationship* (for example, *I imagine being with my partner several years from now*). (Rusbult et al.). Rusbult and colleagues provided evidence for good construct validity and reliability of the scale in the three studies. The scale possessed evidence of excellent internal consistency; the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability ranged from .91 to .95 (in this dissertation it was .90), the factorial structure was unidimensional, the scale score

was calculated as the mean average of the responses, $M = 6.21$, $SD = 2.26$ (Rusbult et al.) and in the current study the values were $M = 7.31$, $SD = 1.18$.

3.2.2.1 The Russian commitment scale.

This scale also possessed excellent internal consistency; the Cronbach's alpha for male/female respondents in this dissertation it was .78/.82. The values for male/female respondents were $M = 7.17/7.13$, $SD = 0.54/0.90$. Appendix 4 contains the English and Russian versions of the commitment scale.

3.2.3 Sacrifice

The satisfaction with sacrifice scale recorded respondents' degree to which they considered sacrifice for the (relationship with the) partner to be fulfilling (Stanley & Markman, 1992). The scale contained six items; three positive and three negative items with responses recorded on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7) answering questions such as *I do not get much fulfillment out of sacrificing for my partner*, *I am not the kind of person who finds satisfaction in putting aside my interests for the sake of my relationship with my partner*, or *I get satisfaction out of doing things for my partner, even if it means I miss out on something I want for myself*. The scale score after inverting the negative questions was calculated as the mean average of the responses with higher scores indicating the higher degree of fulfillment when sacrificing for the spouse or partner; the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability indicated a high internal consistency of items in the scale and was equal to .74 (Stanley & Markman), $M = 31.97$, $SD = 6.74$ (Stanley et al., 2006). In the current study Cronbach's alpha was .86 and values $M = 32.33$, $SD = 7.16$.

3.2.3.1 The Russian Sacrifice Scale.

This scale also possessed excellent internal consistency; the Cronbach's alpha for male/female respondents in this dissertation was .80/.82. The values for male/female respondents were $M = 5.49/5.14$, $SD = 1.11/1.19$. Appendix 5 contains English and Russian versions of the satisfaction with sacrifice scale.

3.2.4 Forgiveness

The Decision to Forgive Scale (DTFS) was used to record a degree to which respondents exhibited a decision to forgive the spouse or partner on a 6-item 6-point ordinal scale with responses such as *strongly disagree* (1), *disagree* (2), *mostly disagree* (3), *mostly agree* (4), *agree* (5), and *strongly agree* (6) to three positive and three inverted statements concerning their decision to forgive, for example, *When my partner hurts me, I want to see them hurt and miserable, I try to live by the motto 'Let bygones be bygones' in my marriage, or I am quick to forgive my partner* (Fincham & Beach, 2002).

Previously DTFS was psychometrically validated with the compelling evidence for its reliability and construct validity (Fincham & Beach). The DTFS contained bidirectional factorial structure, for the positive and negative dimensions Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability indicated high internal consistency of items separately for the positive dimension in the original study of Fincham and Beach (the values in the current study follow in parentheses) = .79 (.72) for wives and = .78 (.70) for husbands; likewise, for the negative dimension, wives = .81 (.84), husbands = .78 (.79); and the test/retest coefficient of stability was .68, and for the whole DTFS Cronbach's alpha ranged from .92 to .94 (.75-.77).

3.2.4.1 The Russian Decision To Forgive Scale.

This scale also possessed good internal consistency; the Cronbach's alpha for male/female respondents in this dissertation was .69/.70. The values for male/female respondents were $M = 4.65/4.28$, $SD = 0.75/0.79$. Appendix 6 contains the English and Russian DTFS' versions.

3.2.5 Sanctification

The Perceived Sacred Qualities Scale (Mahoney et al., 1999) allowed recording respondents' scores of the attitudes toward sanctification as a non-specific to any religion attitude. The scale measured the degree to which a respondent associated their marriage with nine adjectives that were antonyms (e.g., adjective on the left was *Holy*, and the adjective on the right of the scale was *Unholy*). The pairs of adjectives were *Spiritual–Worldly/Secular*, *Blessed–Cursed*, *Mysterious–Routine* and so on. Responses were recorded on a 7-point Likert-type semantic differential scale with the middle rating being zero indicating neutral response. A higher total score indicated a higher level of perception that the relationship was sanctified by the Divine. The Cronbach's coefficient of reliability alpha in the study of Mahoney et al. (and values in parentheses are those observed in this dissertation) for men was .88 (.87) and for women was .87 (.89).

3.2.5.1 The Russian Sanctification Scale.

This scale also possessed excellent internal consistency; the Cronbach's alpha for male/female respondents in this dissertation was .92/.92. The values for male/female respondents were $M = 5.53/4.99$, $SD = 1.15/1.34$. Appendix 7 contains the English and Russian Perceived Sacred Qualities scales.

3.2.6 Relational Equality

This variable was measured using 15 items of Perceived Equality in Marriage (A. Acock, personal communication, March 10, 2016). Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5) to questions such as the following: “*My partner tends to discount my opinion,*” “*I feel free to express my opinion about issues in our relationship,*” “*My partner makes decisions that affect our family without talking to me first,*” and “*My partner has more influence in our relationship than I do.*” After revising the coding of inverted items, the higher score indicated higher relational equality between partners. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficients of reliability in the study of Day and Acock (2013) (followed by the values observed in this dissertation) were excellent for female .92 (.93) and for male .91 (.92) respondents.

3.2.6.1 The Russian Relational Equality Scale.

This scale also possessed excellent internal consistency; the Cronbach’s alpha for male/female respondents in this dissertation was .86/.87. The values for male/female respondents were $M = 3.82/3.65$, $SD = 0.57/0.63$. Appendix 8 contains the English and Russian versions of the perceived equality in marriage scales.

3.2.7 Couple’s Satisfaction

The 16-item Couples Satisfaction Index [CSI(16); Funk & Rogge, 2007)] was used to record responses about participants satisfaction with their relationships. Responses were recorded using three types of scales. The first type of a scale recorded the answer on a single item 7-point ordinal scale “*Please indicate the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship*” with the following responses: *extremely unhappy* (0),

fairly unhappy (1), *a little unhappy* (2), *happy* (3), *very happy* (4), *extremely happy* (5), and *perfect* (6). Second, a set of nine items on a 6-point ordinal scale with response options from *all the time* (5), *most of the time* (4), *more often than not* (3), *occasionally* (2), *rarely* (1), and *never* (0) to questions such as *In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?* or with responses such as *not at all* (0), *a little* (1), *somewhat* (2), *mostly* (3), *almost completely* (4), and *completely* (5) to questions such as *our relationship is strong*, *I have a warm and comfortable relationship with my partner*, and *I really feel like part of a team with my partner*. Third, a 5-item semantic differential scale was used to record responses to the questions that best described how participants felt about their relationship. The 6-point items' responses from (0) to (5) were recorded in such a way that responses near negative adjectives such as *boring*, *bad*, *empty*, *fragile*, *discouraging*, and *miserable* were recorded as either (0), (1), or (2) while when respondents chose responses near opposite (positive) adjectives, such as *interesting*, *good*, *full*, *sturdy*, *hopeful*, and *enjoyable* were recorded as either (3), (4), or (5) based on their proximity of a ruler to the pairs of adjectives (*bad-good*, *miserable-enjoyable*, etc.). Total CSI(16)'s higher scores indicated higher levels of satisfaction with the relationship. Total score range was 0–81, $M = 61$, $SD = 17$; the Cronbach's coefficient of reliability alpha was .98 indicating very high internal consistency of responses (Funk & Rogge). In the current study the values were for male/female respondents as following $M = 64.69/62.98$, $SD = 14.71/16.81$; the Cronbach's alpha was .97/.98.

3.2.7.1 Russian Couple's Satisfaction.

The 16-item Russian Couples Satisfaction Index [CSI(16R)] recorded participants' responses to items in the Russian language equally to those in the English (original) version used in this study. The CSI(16R) was adapted from the original CSI(16) with sufficient assurance of psychometric, linguistic, and cultural equivalence. In this dissertation, the male respondents' scores ranged from 0–81, $M = 64.58$, $SD = 13.06$, and Cronbach's coefficient of reliability alpha was .97. The female respondents' total score ranged from 2–81, $M = 59.89$, $SD = 17.10$, and Cronbach's alpha was .98. Across all scales, the scores were kept continuous. Appendix 9 contains the English and Russian versions of the Couples Satisfaction Index.

3.3 Analytical Approach

The path analysis provided estimates to answer research questions one and two. Answering research questions three and four required using the actor-partner interdependence model to test the hypotheses of interdependency between spouses (partners) (Kenney et al., 2006). The dataset has been transformed from an individual to a pairwise format (Kenney et al.). Responses from only those individuals whose spouse also participated in the study were included in the analysis. Determining the data non-independence was done following Cook and Kenny (2005) by analyzing the Person's product-moment correlation between scores received from male and female respondents; the coefficient of greater than .2 would suggest the presence of interdependence. An a priori power analysis using G*Power (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) based on a two-tailed alpha (α) value of .05, a beta (β) value of .20, and a medium effect size of $r =$

.30 (Cohen, 1988), yielded a recommended sample size of 84, a small to medium effect size of $r = .20$ (Cohen), yielded a recommended sample size of 193 and a small effect size of $r = .10$ (Cohen) yielded a recommended sample size of 782 individuals. The adjustment to power analysis for coupled data required multiplying the sample size by $\sqrt{\frac{2}{1+r}}$ and to use the new sample size n as the number of dyads, not individuals (Kenny et al., 2006, p. 57). Therefore, these calculations yielded the sample size of 104 couples to detect a medium effect size of $r = .30$; 249 couples to detect a small to medium effect size of $r = .20$; and 1,054 couples to detect a small effect size of $r = .10$. Therefore, available American 435 couples provided sufficient power to detect small to medium effect sizes. The available 129 Russian couples provided sufficient power to detect a medium effect size of $r = .30$. Statistical analyses were conducted using AMOS 22 to answer the first two research questions and syntax of mixed model analysis in SPSS 22 to answer the research questions three and four.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

Table 3 contains descriptive statistics and zero order correlations on the variables used in the relational religiosity model in the American sample ($n = 1,529$) and Table 4 contains that for the Russian sample ($n = 529$) used in this dissertation.

4.1 Research Question 1

4.1.1 Descriptive Statistics of the American Sample

The American sample included scores from individuals who answered questions to the variables of interest. The data in the sample $n = 1,529$ was treated at the individual level of analysis by splitting the sample into male 528 (34.5%) and female 1,001 (65.5%) subsamples. Respondents' age ranged from 18 to 86 years ($M = 42.0$, $SD = 14.7$). Most participants were White (84.4%), 5.1% were Black, 2.7% were Asian, 2.6% were Hispanic/Latino, 1.2% were Russians, 1.0% were Ukrainians, and 3.0% of respondents indicated other racial and ethnic backgrounds. The majority of respondents (71.2%) were married, 26.5% were cohabiting, and 2.3% were in other types of relationship (e.g., distant, living apart together, dating, divorced, widowed, and other). Only 4.4% of the respondents completed high school, while a quarter (25.1%) did some college or completed a professional school, 33.9% completed an undergraduate degree, 27.3% completed master's and 9.0% doctoral studies. Almost half of the respondents (46.8%) stated they strongly believed in God or the Divine, 16.4% indicated they believed in God or the Divine, 14.1% believed a little, and 22.6% did not believe or strongly did not believe in God or the Divine. The median annual income of respondents was about \$36,000, $M = \$45,480$, and $SD = \$92,280$.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics and Zero-Order Correlations for Variables in the American Sample.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Public Religiosity	—	.81**	.78**	.74**	.83**	.09**	.17**	.10**	.54**	.01	.06
2. Private Religiosity	.83**	—	.92**	.82**	.82**	.08*	.17**	.12**	.53**	-.01	.04
3. Experiential Religiosity	.81**	.92**	—	.82**	.81**	.08**	.19**	.11**	.55**	-.01	.07*
4. Ideological Religiosity	.79**	.85**	.83**	—	.72**	.07*	.15**	.08*	.50**	-.07*	.04
5. Intellectual Religiosity	.82**	.79**	.78**	.70**	—	.11**	.17**	.12**	.50**	.04	.07*
6. Commitment	.12**	.14**	.13**	.17**	.11*	—	.52**	.31**	.54**	.52**	.75**
7. Sacrifice	.20**	.20**	.18**	.20**	.17**	.51**	—	.42**	.52**	.46**	.61**
8. Forgiveness	.15**	.15**	.12**	.11*	.14**	.25**	.46**	—	.34**	.37**	.48**
9. Sanctification	.58**	.60**	.59**	.59**	.49**	.48**	.45**	.27**	—	.44**	.65**
10. Relational equality	.02	.06	.06	.07	.04	.42**	.43**	.32**	.40**	—	.73**
11. Couple's satisfaction	.03	.07	.06	.08	.03	.67**	.55**	.40**	.57**	.64**	—
<i>M</i> (male)	2.82	3.04	2.72	3.47	3.05	7.42	5.63	4.35	5.09	3.89	64.69
<i>SD</i>	1.54	1.54	1.46	1.50	1.29	1.07	1.09	0.72	1.14	0.71	14.72
<i>M</i> (female)	2.92	3.29	2.90	3.75	3.03	7.34	5.38	4.15	5.00	4.06	62.98
<i>SD</i>	1.54	1.50	1.41	1.38	1.24	1.21	1.23	0.74	1.19	0.72	16.81

Note. Male scores are below diagonal, $n = 528$; female scores are above diagonal, $n = 1,001$; means and standard deviations are bootstrapped; * $p < .05$ (2-tailed); ** $p < .01$ (2-tailed).

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics and Zero-Order Correlations for Variables in the Russian Sample.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Public Religiosity	—	.81**	.78**	.74**	.83**	.09**	.17**	.10**	.54**	.02	.06
2. Private Religiosity	.87**	—	.92**	.82**	.82**	.08**	.17**	.12**	.529	-.01	.04
3. Experiential Religiosity	.78**	.86**	—	.82**	.81**	.08**	.19**	.11**	.55**	-.01	.07*
4. Ideological Religiosity	.78**	.77**	.71**	—	.72**	.73*	.15**	.08*	.50**	-.07*	-.04
5. Intellectual Religiosity	.85**	.85**	.79**	.71**	—	.11**	.17**	.12**	.50**	.04	.07*
6. Commitment	.38**	.36**	.41**	.36**	.37**	—	.52**	.31**	.54**	.52**	.75**
7. Sacrifice	.45**	.38**	.43**	.36**	.41**	.52**	—	.42**	.52**	.46**	.61**
8. Forgiveness	.43**	.35**	.40**	.38**	.40**	.42**	.62**	—	.34**	.37**	.48**
9. Sanctification	.58**	.60**	.59**	.59**	.49**	.48**	.45**	.27**	—	.44**	.65**
10. Relational equality	.02	.06	.06	.07	.04	.42*	.43**	.32**	.40**	—	.73**
11. Couple's satisfaction	.03	.07	.06	.08	.03	.67**	.55**	.40**	.57**	.64**	—
<i>M</i> (male)	3.92	4.20	3.99	4.37	4.04	7.17	5.49	4.65	5.53	3.82	64.58
<i>SD</i>	1.36	1.17	1.19	1.01	1.11	0.54	1.11	0.75	1.15	0.57	13.06
<i>M</i> (female)	3.60	4.00	3.74	4.32	3.77	7.13	5.14	4.28	4.99	3.65	59.98
<i>SD</i>	1.43	1.25	1.21	0.95	1.18	0.90	1.19	0.79	1.34	0.63	17.10

Note. Male scores are below diagonal, $n = 174$; female scores are above diagonal, $n = 355$; means and standard deviations are bootstrapped; * $p < .05$ (2-tailed); ** $p < .01$ (2-tailed).

4.1.1.1 Missing data.

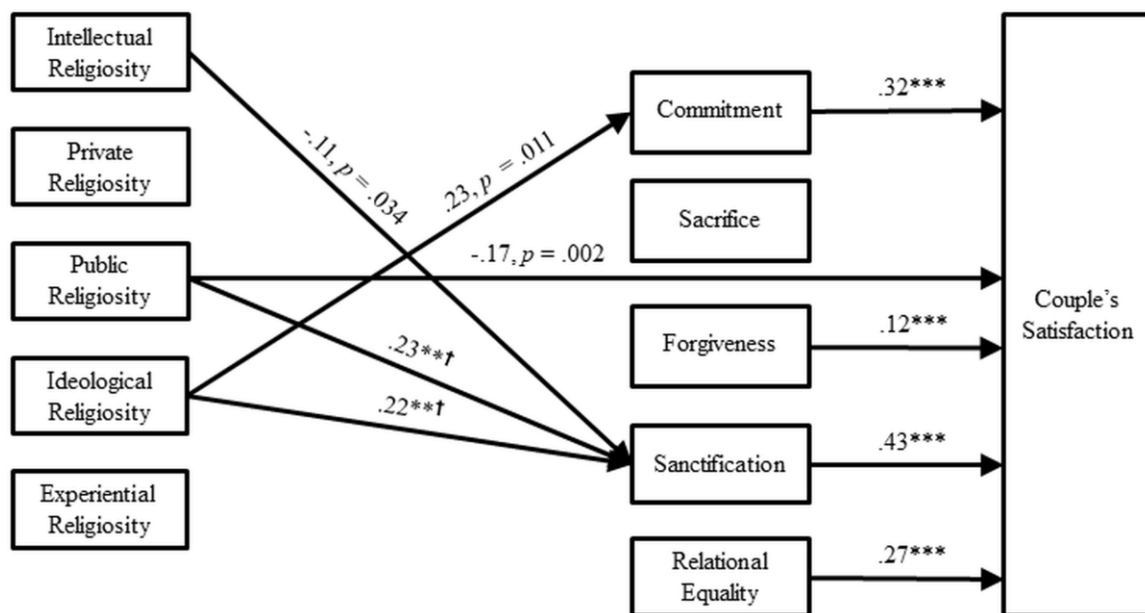
The next step in the analysis was to estimate the number of missing values and the pattern of missingness using SPSS Missing Values Analysis function on all the variables in the relational religiosity model. The number of missing values in the American sample ranged from 0.3% to 0.9% on all scales but for the scales of relational equality (3.5% of missing values) and couple's satisfaction (10.0% of missing values). The total number of missing values in the American sample was 275 (1.64%). The pattern of missingness on every scale in the American sample was assumed to be missing at random (MAR) because the Little's Missing Completely at Random (MCAR) test was statistically significant: $\chi^2 = 349.63$, $df = 231$, $p < .001$, indicating the data was not missing completely at random. I used AMOS Data Imputation function that applied the full information maximum likelihood (FIML) estimation to treat the missing data. The FIML is one of the best missing data treatment techniques widely recommended in scholarship (Acock, 2012; Baradi & Enders, 2005; Little, Jorgensen, Lang, & Moore, 2013); it is robust specifically for data that are not MCAR, yields unbiased parameter estimates, and produces unbiased fit indices when both MCAR and MAR data assumptions hold (Little et al., 2013, Peters & Enders, 2002).

4.1.2 Models' Testing

The relational religiosity model proposed that the exogenous variables of intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity would be indirectly connected to the couple's satisfaction via (a) positive links to relational processes of commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, and sanctification and (b) presumably negative links to relational equality. The exogenous variables' residuals (of the five domains of intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity) were allowed to correlate based on theoretical grounds (Huber & Huber, 2012). Likewise, the

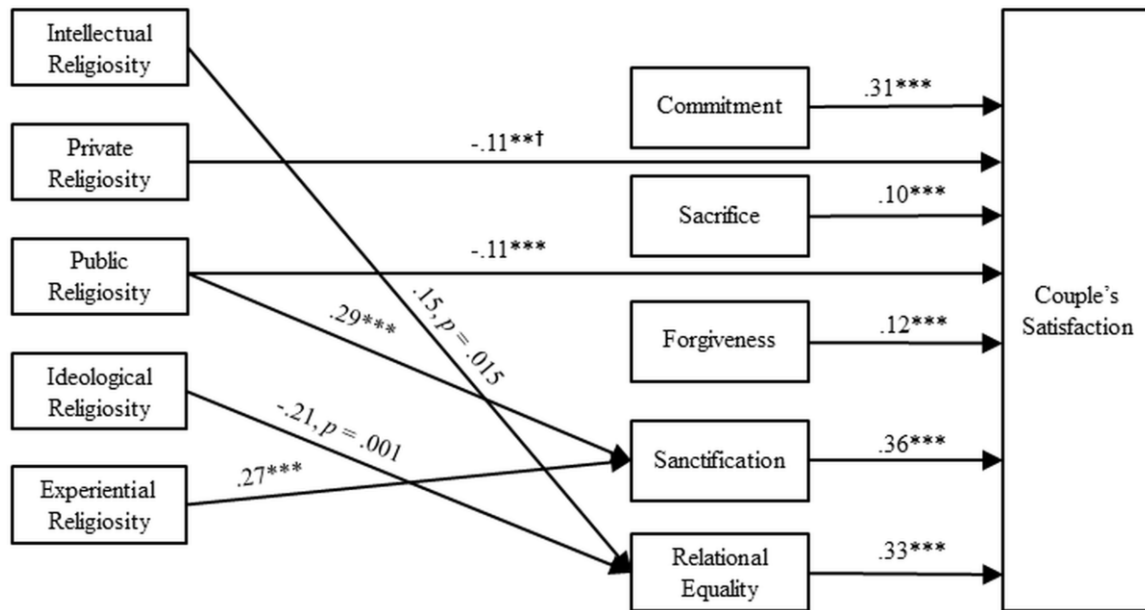
residuals among the intervening variables (of commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, sanctification, and relational equality) were correlated based on theoretical grounds (Day & Acock, 2013). The model was tested as fully saturated with imputed missing data and five thousand bootstrapping iterations to generate confidence intervals. Results of testing the relational religiosity model in the American male subsample indicated that the scores of couple's satisfaction were directly associated with the lower levels of public religiosity and higher levels of commitment, forgiveness, sanctification, and relational equality (see Figure 3). Results of testing the model in the American female

Figure 3 Standardized coefficients for the fully saturated relational religiosity model, American male subsample, $n = 528$. Observed variables are shown in rectangles. Only statistical paths are shown. *** $p < .001$, **† $p = .003$.



subsample indicated that couple's satisfaction was directly negatively associated with the levels of public and private religiosity and positively related to the levels of commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, sanctification, and relational requalfy (see Figure 4).

Figure 4 Standardized coefficients for the fully saturated relational religiosity model, American female subsample, $n = 1,001$. Observed variables are shown in rectangles. Only statistical paths are shown. *** $p < .001$, **† $p = .003$.



4.1.2.1 Hypothesis 1.1.

This hypothesis stated that the commitment would positively mediate the centrality of (intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential) religiosity on the couple's satisfaction for men and women in the American sample. The results of testing the model suggested that ideological religiosity scores statistically predicted commitment scores ($\beta = .23$, 95% BCa CI [.05, .39], $p = .011$, $R^2 = .031$, $p = .009$) and commitment scores, in turn, statistically predicted couple's satisfaction scores ($\beta = .32$, 95% BCa CI [.25, .40], $p < .001$) in the American male subsample. The word *predicted* hereafter does not indicate causation but only an association between the variables due to the cross-sectional design of this study. Additionally, as being hypothesized, there was a statistically significant indirect effect of ideological religiosity on couple's satisfaction through commitment and sanctification ($\beta = .18$, 95% BCa CI [.03, .33], $p = .022$) for men. Contrary to the hypothesized relationships, commitment did not statistically

mediate the relationship between private, public, intellectual, and experiential religiosity and couple's satisfaction in the American male subsample. Likewise, in the American female subsample, commitment scores did not mediate any of the exogenous variables. However, there was a statistically significant direct effect of commitment on couple's satisfaction scores in the American female subsample ($\beta = .31$, 95% BCa CI [.26, .35], $p < .001$).

4.1.2.2 Hypothesis 1.2.

This hypothesis stated that the sacrifice scores would positively mediate the centrality (intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential) religiosity on the couple's satisfaction for men and women in the American sample. Contrary to the hypothesized relationships, the sacrifice scores did not mediate any of the exogenous variables for neither men nor women. However, there was a statistically significant direct effect of sacrifice on couple's satisfaction scores ($\beta = .10$, 95% BCa CI [.06, .14], $p < .001$) for women.

4.1.2.3 Hypothesis 1.3.

This hypothesis suggested that the forgiveness would positively mediate the centrality of (intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential) religiosity on the couple's satisfaction for men and women in the American sample. The results of path analysis indicated that forgiveness scores did not mediate any of the exogenous variables for either men or women. Nonetheless, there were statistically significant direct effects of forgiveness on couple's satisfaction scores for men ($\beta = .12$, 95% BCa CI [.07, .18], $p < .001$) and for women ($\beta = .12$, 95% BCa CI [.09, .16], $p < .001$) in the American sample.

4.1.2.4 Hypothesis 1.4.

This hypothesis proposed a positive mediation effect of the centrality of (intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential) religiosity on couple's satisfaction through sanctification for men and women. The results of path analysis suggested that there was a statistically significant indirect of ideological on couple's satisfaction through sanctification (and commitment) scores in the American male subsample ($\beta = .18$, 95% BCa CI [.03, .33], $p = .022$). Similarly, in the female subsample, there was a statistically significant indirect effect of public religiosity on couple's satisfaction through sanctification scores ($\beta = .13$, 95% BCa CI [.02, .24], $p = .019$).

However, the direction of a direct effect in male subsample was opposite to that in the hypothesis; the intellectual religiosity scores statistically predicted sanctification scores for men in a negative way ($\beta = -.11$, 95% BCa CI [-.22, -.01], $p = .034$). Yet, in line with this hypothesis, the scores of public religiosity statistically predicted sanctification scores in a positive direction for men ($\beta = .23$, 95% BCa CI [.08, .38], $p = .003$) and for women ($\beta = .29$, 95% BCa CI [.18, .39], $p < .001$). Likewise, the ideological religiosity scores statistically predicted sanctification scores for men ($\beta = .22$, 95% BCa CI [.09, .35], $p = .003$) and experiential religiosity scores statistically predicted sanctification scores for women ($\beta = .27$, 95% BCa CI [.13, .42], $p < .001$).

The scores of intellectual, public, and ideological religiosity statistically explained 40% of the sanctification scores' variability in the American male subsample ($R^2 = .402$, 95% BCa CI [.323, .468], $p = .001$). In the same way, the scores of public and experiential religiosity statistically explained a third of the sanctification scores' variability in the American female subsample ($R^2 = .335$, 95% BCa CI [.286, .379], $p = .001$). Finally, sanctification scores

statistically predicted the couple's satisfaction scores for men ($\beta = .43$, 95% BCa CI [.35, .51], $p < .001$) and women ($\beta = .36$, 95% BCa CI [.30, .42], $p < .001$).

4.1.2.5 Hypothesis 1.5.

This hypothesis stated that the centrality of (intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential) religiosity would be mediated by relational equality in the American male and female subsamples. The results of path analysis failed to support relational equality's mediation in the American male subsample; none of the exogenous variables were connected to relational equality for men. However, in the female subsample, the intellectual religiosity scores statistically predicted relational equality scores in a positive way ($\beta = .15$, 95% BCa CI [.03, .28], $p = .015$), but the ideological religiosity scores statistically predicted the relational equality scores in a negative way ($\beta = -.21$, 95% BCa CI [-.34, -.08], $p = .001$). Finally, relational equality scores statistically predicted couple's satisfaction scores in a positive way for men ($\beta = .27$, 95% BCa CI [.20, .34], $p < .001$) and women ($\beta = .33$, 95% BCa CI [.28, .37], $p < .001$); however, results of the analysis failed to support hypothesized mediation effects of relational equality for men or women.

4.1.2.6 Hypothesis 1.6.

This hypothesis stated that all five domains of religiosity would have a direct statistical relationship with the couple's satisfaction in American male and female subsamples. Contrary to the hypothesis, the results of path analysis suggested no statistical direct effect of intellectual, ideological, and experiential religiosity and a negative statistical direct effect of public religiosity on couple's satisfaction scores in both American male ($\beta = -.17$, 95% BCa CI [-.28, -.07], $p = .002$) and female ($\beta = -.11$, 95% BCa CI [-.16, -.06], $p < .001$) subsamples. Further, there was no

direct statistical effect of private religiosity on couple's satisfaction scores for men, but for women, it was statistical and negative ($\beta = -.11$, 95% BCa CI $[-.18, -.04]$, $p = .003$).

Lastly, there were no total effects of any exogenous variables on couple's satisfaction for men or women in the American sample. The scores of commitment, forgiveness, sanctification, and relational equality together explained a very large portion of variability in the scores of couple's satisfaction in the fully saturated relational religiosity model for men ($R^2 = .706$, 95% BCa CI $[.634, .757]$, $p = .002$) and for women ($R^2 = .808$, 95% BCa CI $[.774, .831]$, $p = .001$).

4.2 Research Question 2

4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics of the Russian Sample

The Russian sample ($n = 529$) was comprised of individuals who answered questions of the survey to the variable of interest. The respondents were between 19 and 72 years of age ($M = 38.3$, $SD = 10.0$); mostly female (67.1%); ethnically identified as Russians (66.7%), Ukrainians (25.1%), Armenians (3.0%), and Tatars (2.5%) and others; predominantly married (94.7%) or cohabiting (5.3%); with high school education (4.9%), professional education (26.8%), undergraduate degree (43.1%), master's degree (20.2%), and doctoral degree (3.4%); strongly believed in God or the Divine (69.8%), believed in God or the Divine (16.3%), somewhat believed in God or the Divine (6.2%), and did not or strongly did not believe in God or the Divine (7.2%); with median personal annual income of about \$4,165.00 [at the rate of 57.6291 rubles per dollar on 12/29/17 (The Central Bank, 2017)], and on mean average of 12 years and 4 months in their relationship.

4.2.1.1 Missing data.

The SPSS Missing Values Analysis yielded results supporting MAR assumption [the Little's MCAR test was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 253.62$, $df = 184$, $p. = .001$)]. The missing values among scales ranged from 0.2% to 6.2%, and the total number of missing values was 118 (2.0%). As discussed earlier under the missing data analysis subheading for the American sample, the path analysis in AMOS employed the FIML estimation that was an appropriate missing data handling technique for both MCAR and MAR pattern of messiness (Little et al., 2013).

4.2.2 Models' Testing

Path analysis provided the answers to hypotheses under research question two: what were the pathways from intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity to the couple's satisfaction through the impact of the mediating variables such as commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, sanctification, and relational equality in a sample of the Russian respondents. Results of testing the relational religiosity model in the Russian male subsample indicated that the scores of couple's satisfaction were directly associated with the lower levels of intellectual religiosity and higher levels of commitment, sanctification, and relational equality. Figure 5 contains the fully saturated model for the Russian male subsample, $n = 174$. Next, the results of model testing in the Russian female subsample indicated that the scores of couple's satisfaction were directly associated with the higher levels of commitment, sacrifice, sanctification, and relational equality. Figure 6 contains the standardized coefficients for a fully saturated model in the Russian female subsample, $n = 355$.

Figure 5 Standardized coefficients for the fully saturated relational religiosity model, Russian male, $n = 174$. Observed variables are shown in rectangles. Only statistical paths are shown. *** $p < .001$.

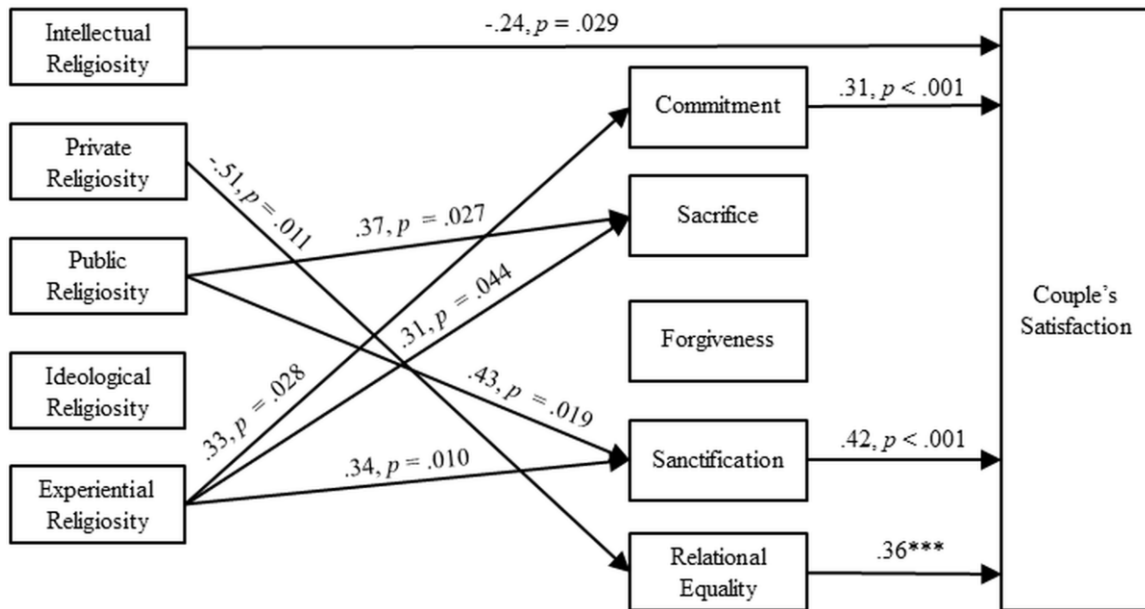
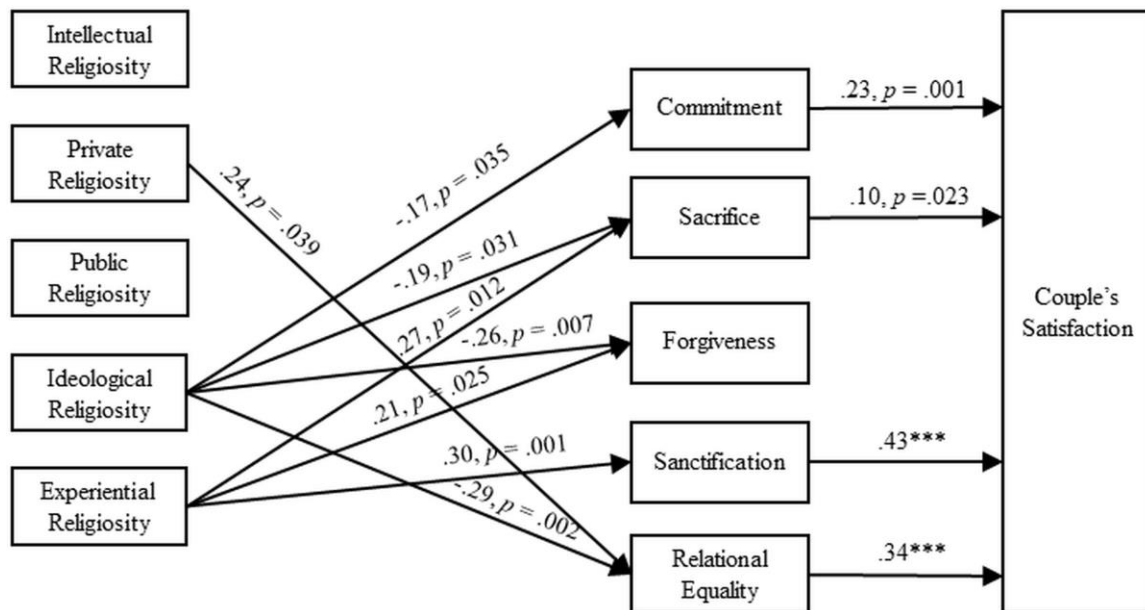


Figure 6 Standardized coefficients for the fully saturated relational religiosity model, Russian female subsample, $n = 355$. Observed variables are shown in rectangles. Only statistical paths are shown. *** $p < .001$.



4.2.2.1 Hypothesis 2.1.

This hypothesis stated that the commitment scores would positively mediate the centrality of (intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential) religiosity on couple's satisfaction for men and women in the Russian sample. The results of path analysis suggested that in the Russian male subsample, experiential religiosity scores statistically predicted commitment scores ($\beta = .33$, 95% BCa CI [.04, .63], $p = .028$, $R^2 = .190$, $p = .011$) but in the female subsample, commitment scores were statistically predicted by ideological religiosity scores in a negative way ($\beta = -.17$, 95% BCa CI [-.32, -.014], $p = .035$, $R^2 = .029$, $p = .017$). The commitment scores, in turn, statistically predicted couple's satisfaction scores positively for men ($\beta = .31$, 95% BCa CI [.15, .46], $p < .001$) and women ($\beta = .23$, 95% BCa CI [.15, .31], $p = .001$) in the Russian sample.

Further, in line with the hypothesis, commitment statistically mediated but only one of five domains of religiosity for each sex. In male subsample, there was a statistically significant indirect effect of experiential religiosity on couple's satisfaction through commitment and sanctification scores ($\beta = .39$, 95% BCa CI [.12, .65], $p = .002$). However, in the Russian female subsample the indirect effect of ideological religiosity on couple's satisfaction was negative ($\beta = -.20$, 95% BCa CI [-.35, -.06], $p = .005$), moreover, the total effect of ideological religiosity in the subsample of Russian women was negative also ($\beta = -.27$, 95% BCa CI [-.43, -.12], $p = .001$).

4.2.2.2 Hypothesis 2.2.

This hypothesis suggested that the centrality of (intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential) religiosity would be indirectly related to couple's satisfaction through sacrifice for men and women in the Russian sample. The results of path analysis failed to support this hypothesis; however, the sacrifice scores were statistically predicted by the scores of public ($\beta =$

.37, 95% BCa CI [.05, .66], $p = .027$) and experiential ($\beta = .31$, 95% BCa CI [.06, .62], $p = .044$) religiosity in the male subsample. In turn, sacrifice scores did not statistically predict the scores of couple's satisfaction for men.

For women, the sacrifice scores statistically predicted couple's satisfaction scores ($\beta = .10$, 95% BCa CI [.01, .18], $p = .023$). The sacrifice scores were statistically predicted by experiential religiosity scores in a positive way ($\beta = .27$, 95% BCa CI [.07, .49], $p = .012$) but ideological religiosity scores predicted sacrifice scores in a negative way ($\beta = -.19$, 95% BCa CI [-.36, -.02], $p = .031$) in the Russian female subsample. Together experiential and ideological religiosity scores statistically accounted for 12.7% variability in the sacrifice scores for women (95% BCa CI [.003, .060], $p = .017$). Similarly, experiential and public religiosity statistically explained 22.8% of the variability in the sacrifice scores in the Russian male subsample (95% BCa CI [.104, .331], $p = .017$).

4.2.2.3 Hypothesis 2.3.

This hypothesis proposed that forgiveness would positively mediate the centrality of religiosity domains (intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential religiosity) on the couple's satisfaction in the Russian sample. The results failed to support this hypothesis for both sexes. Nonetheless, there were two direct effects on forgiveness in the Russian female subsample; experiential religiosity scores statistically predicted forgiveness scores in a positive way ($\beta = .21$, 95% BCa CI [.03, .39], $p = .025$) but ideological scores statistically predicted forgiveness scores in a negative way ($\beta = -.26$, 95% BCa CI [-.45, -.08], $p = .007$). Together ideological and experiential religiosity scores statistically accounted for 12.5% of the variability in the scores of forgiveness in the Russian female subsample (95% BCa CI [.058, .190], $p = .003$).

4.2.2.4 Hypothesis 2.4.

This hypothesis stated that sanctification would positively mediate the centrality of (intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential) religiosity on couple's satisfaction in the Russian sample. The results of path analysis supported a statistical indirect effect of experiential religiosity scores on couple's satisfaction scores through sanctification and commitment scores ($\beta = .39$, 95% BCa CI [.12, .65], $p = .002$ as was reported above) for men. Sanctification scores statistically predicted couple's satisfaction scores strongly ($\beta = .42$, 95% BCa CI [.26, .59], $p = .001$) in the Russian male subsample. Contrary to hypothesis, in the Russian female subsample, sanctification did not statistically mediate any of the exogenous variables of religiosity. However, experiential religiosity scores strongly predicted sanctification scores ($\beta = .30$, 95% BCa CI [.12, .48], $p = .001$) and, in turn, sanctification scores statistically strongly predicted couple's satisfaction scores ($\beta = .43$, 95% BCa CI [.32, .55], $p < .001$ for women in the Russian sample. Public and experiential religiosity scores together explained 22.7% of variability in the sanctification scores (95% BCa CI [.143, .305], $p = .002$) in the Russian female and 49.2% (95% BCa CI [.334, .587], $p = .004$) male subsamples.

4.2.2.5 Hypothesis 2.5.

This hypothesis stated that relational equality would mediate the centrality of (intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential) religiosity on couple's satisfaction for Russian men and women. The results of path analysis failed to support this hypothesis. Nonetheless, a statistical relationship between private religiosity and relational equality scores was strongly negative for men ($\beta = -.51$, 95% BCa CI [-.92, -.90], $p = .011$, $R^2 = .079$, 95% BCa CI [.014, .148], $p = .012$) but positive for women ($\beta = .24$, 95% BCa CI [.10, .46], $p = .039$) in

the Russian sample. Additionally, intellectual religiosity scores statistically predicted relational equality scores in a negative way ($\beta = -.29$, 95% BCa CI $[-.46, -.11]$, $p = .002$); private and ideological religiosity scores explained 4.00% of variability in equality scores (95% BCa CI $[-.008, .069]$, $p = .016$) in the Russian female subsample.

4.2.2.6 Hypothesis 2.6.

This hypothesis stated that intellectual, private, public, ideological, and experiential domains of religiosity would be in a statistical relationship with the couple's satisfaction in Russian sample. The results of path analysis supported negative relationships between the scores of intellectual religiosity that statistically predicted the scores of couple's satisfaction for Russian men ($\beta = -.24$, 95% BCa CI $[-.46, -.21]$, $p = .029$). In the Russian female subsample, results of analysis failed to support this hypothesis. Lastly, there were no total effects for men in the Russian sample, but for women, the statistical total effect of the religious ideology on couple's satisfaction scores was negative ($\beta = -.27$, 95% BCa CI $[-.43, -.12]$, $p = .001$). The model explained a large portion of variability in the scores of couple's satisfaction for the Russian men ($R^2 = .618$, 95% BCa CI $[-.484, .683]$, $p = .009$) and women ($R^2 = .743$, 95% BCa CI $[-.678, .780]$, $p = .005$).

4.3 Research Question 3

This research question evaluated the interpersonal influences of religiosity on the couple's satisfaction in the American sample by evaluating the effect of (husband's) religiosity on couple's satisfaction and how that effect predicted husbands' own (actor effect) and their wives' (partner effect) couple's satisfaction. Similarly, the third research question asked how wives' religiosity predicted their own and their husbands' couple's satisfaction in the American sample.

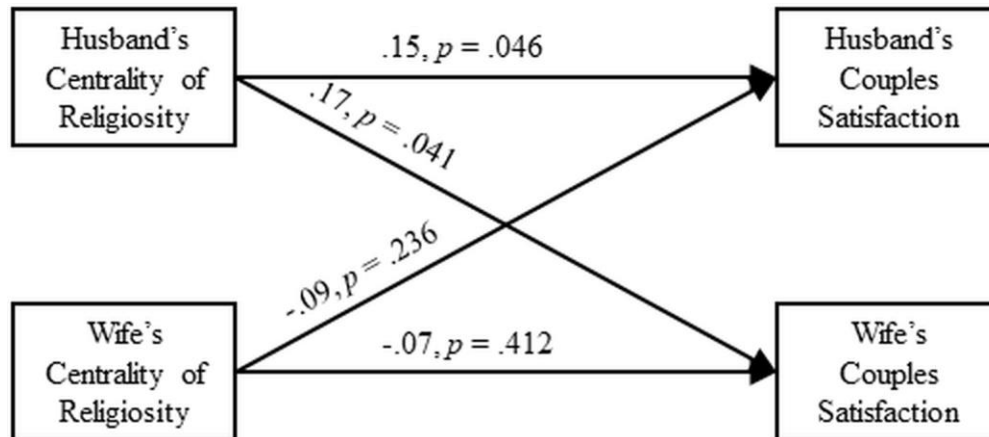
The set of four hypotheses to answer this research question follows descriptive statistics' report below.

4.3.1 Descriptive Statistics of the American Dyadic Sample

The American dyadic sample was comprised from individuals and their spouses (partners) taken from the total American sample of 2,096 individuals by removing (a) 1,168 individuals' responses because their spouse did not participate in the study, (b) 48 responses from the same-sex couples because the aim of the study consisted of heterosexual couples, and (c) 10 responses as double entrances of five individuals. The data was treated at the dyadic level of analysis in which each individual was nested within a couple. The American dyadic sample of $n = 870$ individuals was nested in 435 dyads and consisted of 50.0% male and 50.0% female participants. Respondents' age ranged from 20 to 85 years ($M = 41.0$, $SD = 14.5$). Most participants were White (84.0%), 5.7% were Black, 3.6% were Asian, 2.4% were Hispanic/Latino, and 4.3% of respondents indicated other racial backgrounds. Most of respondents (81.1%) were married, 17.2% were cohabiting, and 1.7% were in other types of relationship. Only 0.7% of the respondents stated they had lower than high school level of education. Others indicated they had a high school diploma (4.6%), some college but no degree (15.3%), completed a professional school (6.9%), completed an undergraduate degree (35.4%), 29.1% completed a master's degree and 7.5% doctoral degree, and 0.6% completed post-doctoral studies. Almost half (47.1%) of respondents stated they strongly believed in God or the Divine, 19.7% indicated they believed in God or the Divine, 11.5% believed a little, and 21.7% did not or strongly did not believe in God or the Divine. The median annual income of respondents was about \$36,000, $M = \$54,965$, and $SD = \$40,968$. American couples stayed in the current relationship on a mean average 13 years and nine months.

The Centrality of Religiosity Scale mean score was $M = 3.15$, $SD = 1.31$, and its range was 1-5, interclass Pearson's coefficient of correlation (ICC) male versus female was $r = .79$. Couple Satisfaction Index mean score was $M = 64.27$, $SD = 14.34$, range was 1-81, ICC Pearson's coefficient of correlation was $r = .63$. Prior to scales' calculation, the FIML missing data treatment technique was applied using AMOS Data Imputation Function that yielded a complete dataset with no missing values on the items of Centrality of Religiosity Scale and Couples Satisfaction Index scale. Hypotheses 3.1 and 3.2 tested the actor effects; similarly, hypotheses 3.3 and 3.4 tested the partner effects of the centrality of religiosity on couple's satisfaction; dyads were distinguishable based on their sex variable. Figure 7 contains the actor-partner interdependence model (APIM) with standardized coefficients for the American dyadic sample.

Figure 7 Actor-partner interdependence model with standardized coefficients for the American sample, $n = 870$ individuals nested in 435 couples. Observed variables are shown in rectangles.



4.3.1.1 Hypothesis 3.1.

This hypothesis suggested a positive actor effect of husband's religiosity on couple's satisfaction in the American dyadic sample. Results of testing APIM with distinguishable dyads provided evidence to support this statistically significant actor effect; husbands' religiosity score

positively predicted their own couple's satisfaction score ($t = 2.00, p = .046, \beta = .15, 95\% \text{ CI } [.01, .29]$). On each one standard deviation change in husbands' centrality of religiosity score, their score of couple's satisfaction changed for 0.15 of standard deviation.

4.3.1.2 Hypothesis 3.2.

This hypothesis suggested that there was a positive actor effect of the wife's religiosity score on her score of couple's satisfaction. Results of testing APIM failed to support this hypothesis in non-statistical actor effect for wife's religiosity score on their couple's satisfaction score ($t = -.82, p = .412, \beta = -.07, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.237, .097]$) in the American dyadic sample.

4.3.1.3 Hypothesis 3.3.

This hypothesis indicated that a partner effect of wife's religiosity score on her husband's couple's satisfaction score could be present. Results of APIM testing using the American dyadic sample failed to support a statistical association of the wife's religiosity with her husband's score on couple's satisfaction ($t = -1.19, p = .236, \beta = -.09, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.238, .059]$).

4.3.1.4 Hypothesis 3.4.

This hypothesis indicated that a partner effect of husband's religiosity could positively predict his wife's couple's satisfaction. Results of testing APIM provided sufficient evidence to support this hypothesis; there was a statistically significant positive partner effect of husband's religiosity score on his wife's couple's satisfaction score ($t = 2.06, p = .041, \beta = .17, 95\% \text{ CI } [.01, .33]$) for the respondents in the American dyadic sample.

4.3.2 Measurement Invariance in the American Dyadic Sample

Comparing groups on the measures of the same construct (e.g. couple's satisfaction) required testing for measurement invariance of the instrument (Couples Satisfaction Index) between male and female respondents within each language sample while cross-cultural comparison was outside of the scope of this dissertation. Recall the five different nested levels of measurement invariance described above (a) dimensional invariance when the number of factors is the same, (b) configural invariance (the same items load on the same factor), (c) metric (pattern) invariance, in which parameter estimates are invariant, (d) strong factorial (scalar) invariance when the structural covariances are invariant, and (e) strict factorial, in which measurement residuals are invariant (Meredith, as cited in Gregorich, 2006). Comparing the mean scores between groups required evidence for at least the first three levels of invariance. In this dissertation, the main structural equation model of 16-item Couples Satisfaction Index loaded on a single factor well when all parameters were estimated freely for each subsample (male and female), $\chi^2(160) = 527.75, p < .001$, CFI = .974, RMSEA = .052 that supported the dimensional and configural invariance between two groups.

Further, the fit did not deteriorate statistically significantly when constraining the path coefficients of couple's satisfaction to equality, $\chi^2(175) = 551.52, p < .001$, CFI = .974, RMSEA = .050; $\Delta\chi^2(15) = 23.77, p = .069$, $\Delta\text{CFI} = .000$, $\Delta\text{RMSEA} = -.002$, thus, metric (pattern) invariance in the American sample was supported. Moreover, the chi-square difference test tends to be oversensitive to a large sample size; therefore, Cheung and Rensvold (2002) indicated that other parameters of the model fit must be considered when testing for measurement invariance. Cheung and Rensvold suggested the difference in CFI below .01 would indicate no statistically significant change of the parameters in the model fit indices in constrained models (as compared

to the unconstrained model). Therefore, the application of Cheung and Rensvold's suggestion provided support for strong factorial (scalar) invariance: the fit of the model with constrained structural covariances did not deteriorate statistically, $\Delta\chi^2(32) = 97.89, p = .007, \Delta CFI = .004, \Delta RMSEA = -.001$ and concluded that the measure of couple's satisfaction was sex invariant at the level of strong factorial (scalar) invariance in the American dyadic sample.

The strong factorial invariance warranted the APIM's results testing in the American sample that indicated no statistically significant difference between scores of couple's satisfaction between wives and husbands ($t = -1.35, p = .179$) in the American dyadic sample. Similarly, there was no statistically significant difference in the effect of the sex variable for actor effects ($t = -1.58, p = .116$) nor for the partner effect ($t = 1.89, p = .059$). That meant husbands and wives effects of their own centrality of religiosity score on their own couple's satisfaction scores were not statistically significantly different and the partner effects on their spouses' scores of couple's satisfaction were not statistically significantly different.

4.4 Research Question 4

This research question aimed to investigate the interpersonal influences of the religiosity on the couple's satisfaction in the Russian dyadic sample. The effect of religiosity on husbands' own couple's satisfaction, the actor effect, and on their wives' couple's satisfaction, the partner effect, (and vice versa for the wives) were tested. Following descriptive statistics' report, evidence from testing of four hypotheses provided answer to the last research question.

4.4.1 Descriptive Statistics of the Russian Dyadic Sample

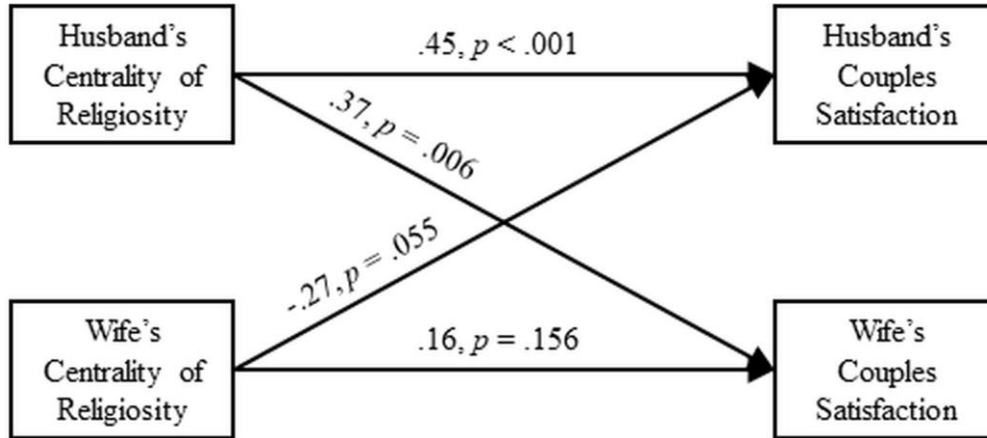
The Russian dyadic sample was derived from the original sample of 935 Russian respondents included 346 of "coupled" individuals (173 couples). Forty entrances from same-sex

couples and four double entrances from 346 coupled individuals were removed resulting in a Russian dyadic sample of $n = 258$ individuals (129 dyads). The Russian dyadic sample consisted of 50.0% male and 50.0% female participants whose age ranged from 20 to 72 years ($M = 39.5.0$, $SD = 9.6$). Most participants self-identified as Russians (65.1%), 23.6% were Ukrainians, 2.7% were Armenians, 2.3% were Belarusians, 2.3% were Tatars, and 4.0% of respondents indicated other ethnic backgrounds. The majority of respondents (97.7%) were married, 1.2% were cohabiting, and 1.1% were in other types of relationship (e.g., distant or living apart together). Only 2.3% of the respondents stated they had lower than a high school diploma level of education. Others indicated they had a high school diploma (6.2%), completed a professional school (31.4%), completed an undergraduate degree (40.1%), completed a master's degree (15.9%), or completed a doctoral degree (3.1%). Two-thirds of the respondents (66.7%) strongly believed in God or the Divine, 23.6% indicated they believed in God or the Divine, 4.3% believed a little, and 5.5% did not or strongly did not believe in God or the Divine. The median annual income of respondents was about \$5,000.00 [at the rate of 57.6291 rubles per dollar on 12/29/17 (The Central Bank, 2017)], and respondents were on mean average 13.5 years in their relationship. Centrality of Religiosity Scale's mean average score was $M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.13$, range 1-5, interclass Pearson's ICC $r = .79$.

Couple Satisfaction Index mean average score was $M = 64.27$, $SD = 14.34$, range was 1-81, ICC Pearson's coefficient of correlation was $r = .66$. The number of values missing on the Centrality of Religiosity scale was 4 (1.6%), and on the Couples Satisfaction Index it was 9 (3.5%). Using AMOS Data imputation function, I applied FIML missing data missing data treatment technique that yielded a complete dataset with no missing data. Hypotheses 4.1 and 4.2

tested the actor effects; similarly, hypotheses 4.3 and 4.4 tested the partner effects of the centrality of religiosity on couple's satisfaction scores in the Russian sample (see Figure 8).

Figure 8 Actor-partner interdependence model with standardized coefficients for the Russian sample, $n = 258$ individuals nested in 129 couples. Observed variables are shown in rectangles.



4.4.1.1 Hypothesis 4.1.

This hypothesis suggested that there was a positive actor effect of husband's religiosity score on his score of couple's satisfaction in the Russian dyadic sample. Results of testing APIM in the Russian dyadic sample provided evidence to support this statistically significant actor effect. Husband's religiosity score positively predicted their own couple's satisfaction score ($t = 3.65, p < .001, \beta = .45, 95\% \text{ CI } [.21, .70]$).

4.4.1.2 Hypothesis 4.2.

This hypothesis suggested that there was a positive actor effect of the wife's religiosity score on her score of couple's satisfaction. Results of testing APIM failed to support this hypothesis in non-statistical actor effect for wife's religiosity score on their couple's satisfaction score ($t = -1.43, p = .156, \beta = -.22, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.52, .08]$) in the Russian dyadic sample.

4.4.1.3 Hypothesis 4.3.

This hypothesis indicated that a partner effect of wives' religiosity score on her husbands' score of couple's satisfaction would be present. Results of APIM testing failed to support statistical association of the wife's religiosity with her husband's score on couple's satisfaction ($t = -1.93, p = .055, \beta = -.27, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.55, .01]$).

4.4.1.4 Hypothesis 4.4.

This hypothesis suggested that a partner effect of husband's religiosity could positively predict his wife's couple's satisfaction. Results of testing APIM provided sufficient evidence to support this hypothesis; there was a statistically significant positive partner effect of husband's religiosity score on his wife's score for her couple's satisfaction ($t = 2.77, p = .006, \beta = .37, 95\% \text{ CI } [.11, .64]$) for the respondents in the Russian dyadic sample.

4.4.2 Measurement Invariance in the Russian Dyadic Sample

Results of testing for measurement invariance provided evidence to support strong factorial (scalar) invariance as follows: The main structural equation model of CSI's 16 items loaded on a single factor well when all parameters were estimated freely, $\chi^2(160) = 296.75, p < .001, \text{CFI} = .966, \text{RMSEA} = .058$, thus indicating support for the dimensional and configural invariance. Next, testing for metric (pattern) invariance, in which parameter estimates were constrained, yielded statistically insignificant change of the goodness-of-fit indices, $\chi^2(175) = 309.73, p < .001, \text{CFI} = .967, \text{RMSEA} = .055; \Delta\chi^2(15) = 12.98, p = .604, \Delta\text{CFI} = .001, \Delta\text{RMSEA} = -.003$; thus, metric (pattern) invariance in the Russian sample was supported. Moreover, the fit did not deteriorate significantly given the change in CFI was lower than .01 (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002) when constraining the structural covariances' parameters to equality between

male and female subsamples, $\chi^2(192) = 343.54, p < .001$, CFI = .962, RMSEA = .056; $\Delta\chi^2(32) = 46.79, p = .044$, $\Delta\text{CFI} = .004$, $\Delta\text{RMSEA} = -.002$. Thus, strong factorial (scalar) invariance was supported, which provided evidence for the sex [strong factorial (scalar)] invariance in the measure of couple's satisfaction in the Russian sample.

The strong factorial invariance in the Russian sample warranted the results of APIM statistical analyses that suggested there was a statistically significant main effect of the sex variable on couple's satisfaction score ($t = -2.65, p = .009, \beta = -.19$, 95% CI [-.33, -.05]). That meant compared to husbands, the wives' scores of couple's satisfaction were statistically significantly lower for 0.19 of standard deviation. Similarly, there was a statistically significant difference between the actor effects of husbands and wives ($t = -2.78, p = .006, \beta = -.67$, 95% CI [-1.00, -.19]). Compared to husbands, wives' actor effect was statistically significantly lower for 0.67 standard deviations. Finally, results of APIM testing suggested a statistically significant difference between husbands and wives partner effects ($t = 2.69, p = .008, \beta = .65$, 95% CI [.17, 1.00]). All the estimates of direct effects reported in the models for each subsample used in this dissertation are reported in Table 5.

Table 5 Standardized Direct Effects and *p*-values for Relational Religiosity Model Paths in American and Russian Male and Female Respondents.

		American				Russian			
		Male <i>n</i> = 528		Female <i>n</i> = 1,001		Male <i>n</i> = 174		Female, <i>n</i> = 355	
	Variables	β	<i>p</i>	β	<i>p</i>	β	<i>p</i>	β	<i>p</i>
Centrality of religiosity									
Public →	Commitment	-.06	.509	.03	.601	.13	.462	.18	.142
	Sacrifice	.09	.381	.07	.241	.37	.027	.15	.171
	Forgiveness	.10	.278	.01	.917	.34	.076	.09	.451
	Sanctification	.23	.003	.29	< .001	.43	.019	.16	.124
	Relational equality	-.13	.150	.04	.526	.02	.887	-.09	.402
	Couple's satisfaction	-.17	.002	-.11	< .001	-.08	.394	-.10	.087
Private →	Commitment	.04	.784	-.08	.352	-.22	.405	.01	.968
	Sacrifice	.09	.482	-.04	.614	-.28	.167	.04	.773
	Forgiveness	.23	.078	.08	.369	-.40	.050	.12	.352
	Sanctification	.19	.079	-.02	.802	-.22	.214	.04	.784
	Relational equality	.07	.580	-.05	.574	-.51	.011	.24	.039
	Couple's satisfaction	-.02	.703	-.11	.003	.14	.247	-.13	.037
Experiential →	Commitment	-.06	.602	.04	.669	.33	.028	.02	.827
	Sacrifice	-.03	.740	.16	.063	.31	.044	.27	.012
	Forgiveness	-.16	.141	.04	.662	.27	.075	.21	.025
	Sanctification	.13	.201	.27	< .001	.34	.010	.30	.001
	Relational equality	.04	.768	.05	.545	.30	.062	-.01	.883
	Couple's satisfaction	-.06	.309	.01	.776	-.10	.360	.04	.532
Ideological →	Commitment	.23	.011	.00	.965	.13	.549	-.17	.035

Table 5 (continued)

		American				Russian			
		Male <i>n</i> = 528		Female <i>n</i> = 1,001		Male <i>n</i> = 174		Female, <i>n</i> = 355	
	Variables	β	<i>p</i>	β	<i>p</i>	β	<i>p</i>	β	<i>p</i>
Intellectual →	Sacrifice	.09	.354	-.03	.625	.20	.881	-.19	.031
	Forgiveness	-.08	.372	-.07	.244	.12	.354	-.26	.007
	Sanctification	.22	.003	.10	.086	.12	.317	-.10	.199
	Relational equality	.07	.492	-.21	.001	.23	.096	-.29	.002
	Couple's satisfaction	-.08	.082	.01	.646	-.07	.361	-.07	.116
	Commitment	.02	.796	.12	.050	.10	.617	.06	.589
	Sacrifice	.00	.975	.04	.551	.08	.613	.07	.538
	Forgiveness	.06	.443	.07	.301	.16	.358	.16	.112
	Sanctification	-.11	.034	-.01	.833	.08	.533	.10	.328
	Relational equality	.01	.950	.15	.015	.18	.234	.02	.855
	Couple's satisfaction	.01	.764	-.25	.354	-.24	.029	.00	.929
Commitment	Couple's satisfaction	.32	< .001	.31	< .001	.31	< .001	.23	.001
Sacrifice	Couple's satisfaction	.08	.062	.10	< .001	.13	.128	.10	.023
Forgiveness	Couple's satisfaction	.12	< .001	.12	< .001	-.02	.770	.02	.587
Sanctification	Couple's satisfaction	.43	< .001	.36	< .001	.42	.001	.43	< .001
Relational equality	Couple's satisfaction	.27	< .001	.33	< .001	.36	< .001	.34	< .001

Note. Coefficients with statistical significance lower than conventional .05 level are bolded.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The relational spirituality framework (Mahoney, 2010; 2013) provided a theoretical guide to exploring underlying relationship processes (relational virtues and relational equality) in two different cultures for men and women who were in a committed relationship. Further, the various domains of one's religiosity, such as public, private, ideological, intellectual, and experiential religiosity (Huber & Huber, 2012) shed valuable light on which religiosity domains statistically connected to which relational virtues and relational equality, and how these virtues mediated the domains of religiosity on individually experienced couple's satisfaction. Differentiation of religiosity via five domains (of private, public, intellectual, ideological, and experiential religiosity) provided: (a) a way to clarify which religiosity aspects were functioning as meaningful predictors of relationship processes in men and women and (b) which of the religiosity domains have had an indirect and total effect on couple's satisfaction in both culturally different samples.

Further, one of the individual's variables (e.g., experiences, feelings, attitudes, and actions) may affect (their own) another variable (e.g., couple's satisfaction). However, the effect on the outcome variable (of couple's satisfaction) can be either the effect from one's own experiences, feelings, attitudes, and actions (the actor effect) or the effect of one's spouse or partner (the partner effect) (Kenny et al., 2006). To that end, another primary goal of this study was to evaluate the interpersonal influences of religiosity on the couple's satisfaction in both cultures. Many of the hypotheses were supported across cultures and genders within each culture. However, there were some surprising contradictory findings as well. Given the extensive nature of the results, and for clarity of discussion, those findings

that are particularly notable within the context of the literature or those that provide deeper insight will be discussed.

5.1 The Mediating Role of Relational Virtues

Mahoney (2010), in her relational spirituality framework, suggested that religiosity's effect on couple's satisfaction would be mediated by one's levels of relational virtues (e.g., commitment to the current intimate relationship). Following Mahoney's framework in this study, I hypothesized that every one of the five religiosity domains (private, public, intellectual, ideological, and experiential) would be mediated by every one of the four relationship virtues (commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, and sanctification) and relationship equality. Mitchel et al. (2015) found that commitment together with the other multiple mediators in respective samples exhibited its unique ability to mediate the effects of religiosity's domains on couple's satisfaction above and beyond all other multiple mediators in a model (for multiple mediators' models see Preacher & Hayes, 2008). The results of this study also suggested that commitment, while a statistically significant predictor, worked alongside other virtues, such as sanctification, to positively mediate: (a) the indirect effect of ideological religiosity on couple's satisfaction for the American men, (b) the experiential religiosity's indirect effect for the Russian men, and (c) among Russian women, commitment with sacrifice and forgiveness inversely mediated the effects of ideological religiosity contrary to the hypothesized direction.

5.1.1 Commitment and Sacrifice in American and Russian Men

The results in the male American subsample correspond to the earlier findings of Beach et al. (2008), Olson et al. (2013), and Sullivan (2001) who found a positive

connection between personal commitment to marriage and religious beliefs and convictions due to their public and private practices (e.g., attendance, daily devotions, reading of religious texts at home). These religious practices could have been the outcome of ideological convictions that have been evaluated in this dissertation simultaneously among the five domains of religiosity. In the American male subsample, the ideological (not public or private) religiosity positively predicted their commitment (and sanctification), and commitment, in turn, positively predicted their levels of couple's satisfaction. These results correspond to the previously reported trend in scholarship presenting compelling evidence that relationship commitment is one of the central relationship virtues positively contributing to the relationship outcome (e.g., Fincham et al., 2007; Fowers, 2000; Fowers et al., 2016; Schramm et al., 2017; Worthington et al., 2003).

Similarly, the experiential religiosity among Russian men predicted their relationship commitment and sanctification that in turn positively predicted their couple's satisfaction. This finding is of a particular resemblance with overall Russian cultural context because commitment and sanctification mediated experiential (not ideological as among American men) religiosity. When compared to the American religiosity, the Russian levels of religiosity were lower, perhaps due to the 70-year time of atheism (Huber & Krech, 2008).

Perhaps, in the absence of religious teaching, the more Eastern than Western Russian culture may have contributed to the importance of the transcendent experience, and therefore, the Russian men's experiential religiosity manifested its indirect effect on their couple's satisfaction. The emphasis on the Russians' experience of the transcendence, in fact, has been documented earlier (Kopeikin, 2017; Piedmont & Leach, 2002). The Russian

cultural identity has been strongly embedded with the religiosity according to the Russian Orthodoxy, on the one hand. On the other hand, Russian religiosity does not reveal itself through Conventional Western characteristics, such as ideological or public, and private religiosity—seldom do Russians attend religious services (Ziegler, 2008). Rather the Russian religious individuals consider themselves as being spiritual and have a distinct attribute of specifically Russian spirituality to be different from the Western religiosity-spirituality. Therefore, finding the indirect effect of experiential (versus public or even private or ideological, or intellectual) religiosity in this dissertation was in line with the overall Russian national attitude toward religiosity that has been described as an inner mystical search for significance with a cogitation of fate, luck, and Providence (Allik et al., 2011). This dissertation's finding of experiential religiosity's *positive* indirect effect on couple's satisfaction for Russian men and that of ideological religiosity for American men versus the *negative* effect of religiosity (public for American and ideological for Russian) for women was interesting and corresponded to the previous research results. Earlier researchers have found meaningful differences between the effect of religiosity on male and female respondents' satisfaction with their relationship indicating that compared to men, relationship satisfaction for women was connected to religiosity in a different (less positive) manner (Wilcox & Nock, 2006; Wilcox & Wolfinger, 2008; Wolfinger & Wilcox, 2008).

5.1.2 Commitment and Sacrifice in American and Russian Women

In the American female subsample, the levels of commitment did not statistically connect to any of the religiosity's domains. That meant that for the American women in the sample, commitment was explained by other than any of the religiosity domains. This finding contradicts previous research indicating the positive mediation effect of

commitment on relationship satisfaction (Amato & DeBoer, 2001; Beach et al., 2008; Ellison et al., 2010; Olson et al., 2013; Sullivan, 2001; Worthington et al., 2015). A possible explanation of this finding may be grounded in the fact that in this large American convenient sample of female respondents, their commitment to the relationship was explained in non-religious ways.

Contrary to the hypothesized positive direction of the commitment's mediation effect, Russian women reported in such a way that commitment (sacrifice, and equality each and all together) negatively mediated the effect of ideological religiosity resulting in the negative total effect of ideological religiosity on marital satisfaction. These results were surprising and unexpected; they meant that in this subsample Russian women who have exhibited higher levels of ideological religiosity have also experienced a decline in their commitment to and sacrifice for the relationship as well as they felt less equal in the relationship with their husbands. These results in the Russian samples awaits verification due to the scarcity of studies following Mahoney's relational spirituality framework in the Russian speaking context.

Nonetheless, because results of model testing in other that Russian women groups yielded no total effects of religiosity but only specific indirect effects, it would be erroneous to suggest that religiosity domains in the American male and female and in the Russian male subsamples positively connected to couple's satisfaction through the mediating variables, while in the Russian female subsample religiosity was negatively connected to the couple's satisfaction through the mediating variables. The specific indirect effects of ideological, public, and experiential religiosity benefit respondents in American male and female and the Russian male subsamples. However, the total effect of ideological

religiosity on Russian women's marital satisfaction did suggest that religiosity was negatively connected to satisfaction with the intimate relationship for the Russian women regardless of the presence or absence of relational virtues' and equality's mediation effect (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). In other words, it appeared that higher ideological religiosity "totally ruined" Russian women's marital satisfaction at least at the individual level of analyses when their husbands' religiosity was not taken into consideration by the analysis design or statistical apparatus.

These results, with exception of those in the Russian female subsample, were consistent with existing literature that supported religious involvement's positive effect on commitment (Beach et al., 2008; Mitchel et al., 2015; Olson et al., 2013), which in turn increased the desire to stay in the relationship (Johnson et al., 1999). The fact that only men in both cultures benefited from (a) ideological religiosity (American men) and (b) experiential religiosity (Russian men) was in line with previous research suggesting that men benefit from their own religious participation but women did not (Mitchel et al., 2015; Wilcox & Wolfinger, 2008). For example, the finding of the statistically significant indirect effect of ideological religiosity on couple's satisfaction is consistent with the findings of Mitchell et al. The authors examined the mediation effect of religiousness on marital quality through relational commitment in a sample of 400 college graduates and found the same mediation effect of from religiousness on marital quality through the same scale of commitment (Stanley & Markman, 1992).

Results of this dissertation suggested that neither American or Russian men nor women experienced any statistical increases or decreases in willingness to sacrifice for the partner or their relationship. In other words, personal sacrifice did not mediate the

link between any domain of religiosity and couple's satisfaction. However, Russian women exhibited a surprising negative direct effect; when they were willing to sacrifice for their husbands, wives experienced a small decline in their couple's satisfaction. The absence of religiosity effect on sacrifice for both sexes and in both cultures, moreover, the negative effect of willingness to sacrifice on couple's satisfaction for Russian women was inconsistent with the previous (American) research that indicated a positive connection between the two concepts (Whitton et al., 2002). Additionally, Mahoney (2010) summarized 20-year scholarship on how religiosity connected to couple's satisfaction and suggested that sacrifice (and forgiveness) are important constructs that, in fact, positively mediate religiosity's effect on couple's relational satisfaction.

Similarly, Amato (2007) and Whitton with colleagues argued that the sacrifice enhances mutual relationship through the creation of new meaning and, thus, fosters a more positive mutual relationship (increases couple's satisfaction). In the same manner, Fincham et al. (2007) proposed that sacrificial behavior is a relations process that repairs the relationship and, thus, positively contributes to the couple's satisfaction. The findings in this study indicate that, even though Amato; and Fincham et al.; Mahoney; and Whitton et al. may be correct, in fact, when religiosity construct is evaluated in a complex and holistic manner, and sacrifice is assessed as one among other relationship virtues and relational equality, the mediation effects of sacrifice do not appear to support sacrifice as a meaningful mediator between religiosity and couple's satisfaction. The absence of the mediation effect of sacrifice may, in part, be due to the quality of a convenience sample in this dissertation or in the higher weight of other than forgiveness variables that

mediated the effects of religiosity domains on couple's satisfaction. In any event, replication and verification are imperative for future studies.

Furthermore, a comparison of the cross-cultural connections between religiosity domains on sacrificial behavior suggests a cultural variation in men and women. For instance, compared American men and women (who exhibited a non-statistical link between all domains of religiosity and sacrifice), Russian men's sacrifice was predicted with a medium effect size by public and experiential religiosity whereas Russian women exhibited controversial results. On the one hand, their willingness to sacrifice was positively predicted by experiential religiosity but, on the other hand, ideological religiosity negatively predicted the sacrifice for the Russian women. Further, with regard to sacrifice, both male groups exhibited no direct effect of sacrifice on their couple's satisfaction while for women in both cultures, sacrifice was equally connected to couple's satisfaction in a positive way.

The cross-cultural structural comparison of the pathways from five domains of religiosity to couple's satisfaction through commitment yielded some potential differences between Russian and American participants. For example, the model for American male respondents showed a mediating path from ideological religiosity to relationship satisfaction whereas the model for Russian men showed a mediation effect from experiential religiosity through commitment for both subsamples. That suggested the following, ideology was not a meaningful domain of religiosity, but the experience of the human-Divine interaction or that of the Divine's involvement in the lives of Russian men were more important predictors of couple's satisfaction than ideological religiosity.

Finally, quantitative results of this dissertation provide support for a qualitative study conducted by Goodman, Dollahite, Marks, and Layton (2013) who interviewed 184 religious couples and reported how specific *ideological*, *public*, and *experiential* domains of religiosity explained couple's commitment to each other. These three domains of religiosity from Goodman et al. were the only three of the five domains that exhibited indirect positive effects on couple's satisfaction (except Russian female respondents) in this dissertation.

5.1.3 Sanctification.

In line with the hypothesized effect, sanctification mediated the effect of some domains of religiosity on couples satisfaction for American male and female and Russian male respondents while Russian female participants revealed indifference toward sanctification. This outcome of this dissertation corresponds strongly with the existing literature on the positive effect of sanctification on one's marriage (DeMaris et al., 2010; Ellison et al., 2011; Goodman & Dollahite, 2006; Kusner et al., 2014; Mahoney, 2010, 2013). Even though Russian female respondents did not exhibit statistical mediation effect of religiosity's domains, still sanctification was strongly and positively connected with couple's satisfaction across sexes and cultures. This result was also in line with the previous research suggesting that a meaningful awareness of the Divine's presence in the relationship and the symbolic sacred meaning and significance functions in the same manner across cultures, even if the definition of sanctification differs across cultural and social groups (Hodge, 2013). For instance, theistic or non-theistic view of sanctification did not have a different effect on individuals' couple's satisfaction (Ellison et al., 2011; King, 2003; Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). The similarities between both sexes in American and

Russian male subsamples was in the positive connection of public religiosity to sanctification, which was also positively linked to couple's satisfaction in these three subsamples. That meant higher religious attendance and importance of belonging to a specific religious community was associated with higher levels of understanding that God is present in the committed relationship between the two, which in turn was associated with higher levels of couple's satisfaction in all subsamples, except for Russian female respondents.

Further, sanctification also positively mediated the domains of intellectual and ideological religiosity on couple's satisfaction in American men while American women demonstrated that the levels of experiential religiosity were positively associated with sanctification and further mediated onto their couple's satisfaction together with public religiosity in a positive way. Similarly, the Russian men displayed the same statistical mediation effect of public and experiential religiosity on couple's satisfaction through the sanctification as American women did. That suggested similarities between Russian men and American women in the ways that higher levels of public and experiential religiosity were positively linked to higher levels of sanctification, which was associated with higher scores on couple's satisfaction. In other words, Russian men and American women who attended religious events frequently and who in daily life experienced the human-Divine interaction or presence of God in their lives reported higher levels of understanding that their marriage was embedded in the Divine or contained a sacred meaning (Kusner et al., 2014) and they also reported that their relationship satisfaction was high.

Similarly, the American male respondents who exhibited the positive mediation effect of sanctification on couple's satisfaction also reported high levels of public

religiosity (as Russian men and American women did), but instead of experiential religiosity, American men reported high levels of ideological religiosity that together with intellectual and public religiosity were mediated by sanctification on couple's satisfaction. These variations of the indirect effect of different religiosity's domains are pending replication and verification in different samples of Russian and English speaking participants. These results of sanctification's positive mediation effect in this dissertation were similar to the existing literature findings concerning the sanctification (Mahoney, 2010; Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). For instance, King (2003) found that higher belief even in non-theistic (not related to God) sanctification (having a sacred meaning) marriage was positively connected to couple's satisfaction. Likewise, Kusner and colleagues (2014), in their longitudinal study of 164 heterosexual couples, found that sanctification positively predicted productive communication and negatively predicted the level of conflicts in a very stressful time of the lifespan such as the transition to parenthood. Results of this model testing between cultures and sexes suggested that commitment and sanctification were the two relational virtues that were common among the four different subsamples.

Nonetheless, potential confounding factors must be taken into consideration while explaining results found in these samples. First, the samples in both the American and Russian samples are mostly satisfied couples: compared to the distressed score level of 51.5, the mean average score on couple's satisfaction was much higher in every sample and the lowest score was almost 60 (95% CI [57.92, 62.11]) for the Russian female subsample. Therefore, results of the study may apply to mostly satisfied couples and have limited relevance to couples who are in distressed relationships.

Second, in the first two research questions about the mediation effects of relational virtues and relational equality may have a potential confounding factors that come the relationships among relational virtues themselves. Even though errors among all the intervening variables of commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, sanctification, and equality were allowed to correlate, these relationship virtues and equality could moderate and/or mediate the effects of one another on the couple's satisfaction.

For example, scholars documented the mediating effect of satisfaction with sacrifice from commitment to marital adjustment (e.g., Whitton et al., 2002); the relational religiosity model did not include for this specific mediation effect. Another example is how forgiveness is associated with commitment to the relationship (Fincham, 2000; Fincham et al., 2007); likewise, sacrifice is viewed as a salient element of relationship commitment (Johnson & Horne, 2016). However, compared to a previous attempts to assess relational virtues as indicators for one latent variable (Dand & Acock, 2013), this study attempted to include the relational virtues independently from one another to evaluate their individual mediating effect on the couple's satisfaction; this individuation is a distinct contribution of this project when design and analyses were carried out at an individual level of analysis but relationship does not assume living in isolation. Obviously, relationship supposes interdependency and mutual influences that can affect the relationship outcome; the dyadic conceptualization, research design, and statistical analyses are some of the ways to account for the interdependency of relationships.

5.2 Religiosity and Relationship Satisfaction: Direct Effects

Moving from the individual level of analysis to couples' focus allowed for discovery and verification of the conceptually important element of partners' interrelatedness that affects the (inherently dyadic) couple's satisfaction. After all, the couple's satisfaction is a function of the dyadic bond between spouses. The results of the analysis at the dyadic level suggested that religiosity was connected to couple's satisfaction in a remarkably similar way across both cultures.

For example, the effect of husbands' religiosity was positively linked to their own levels of couple's satisfaction (husband's actor effect); however, the results for wives' religiosity on their couple's satisfaction (wives' actor effect) was not statistically significant in both samples of American and Russian couples. That meant if both husbands and their wives reported higher levels of their religiosity (in both cultures) it was beneficial for husbands only. This result was consistent with existing dyadic literature for the American respondents (Dew & Wilcox, 2011; Wolfinger & Wilcox, 2008) that suggested the wives' religious involvement above average was not preventing a decline in their couple's satisfaction but the husbands' religious involvement, in fact, predicted their happier levels of couple's satisfaction if they attended the church.

Similarly, the partner effect of husbands' religiosity was statistically linked to their wives' reports of their couple's satisfaction. In other words, when both reported higher levels of religiosity, the husband's religiosity positively predicted their wives' satisfaction with the relationship. At the same time, the wives' partner effect (of their religiosity) on their husbands' marital satisfaction was not statistically significant in the current study in both cultures. This finding of the partner's effects corresponded to

previous research. For example, in the American nationally representative sample, Curtis and Ellison (2002) found that compared to wives, the husbands' religiosity has had a greater influence on both spouses' relationship satisfaction.

This dissertation's cross-cultural application of APIM in a sample of Russian speaking respondents yielded similarities and failed to support cultural differences in the ways actor and partner effects played out in the relationship between religiosity and couple's satisfaction for husbands and their wives. Three observations of cultural resemblances are noteworthy. First, the fact that the actor effect of religiosity similarly functioned in two different cultures, when connected to couple's satisfaction, tangibly suggested religiosity's tentative universal link to couple's satisfaction at least between these two cultures used in this dissertation.

Second, the sex differences of experiencing religiosity's actor effect on couple's satisfaction were the same in the two cultures also. These two results suggested more similarities in the ways couple's satisfaction functioned in connection to religiosity's actor effects between husbands and their wives in the two culturally different samples. The third observation of cultural similarities was about the partner's effect experienced by the wives from their husbands' religiosity. In other words, when the partner's effect of husband's religiosity was brought into the analysis, the couple's satisfaction was not statistically connected to wives' own religiosity but their husbands' level of religiosity. This partner's effect was present in both culturally different samples.

Next, compared to an individual level of analysis, a different pattern of results occurred when analyzing the data through a dyadic lens. The negative effects of women's religiosity domains were found at the individual level of analysis in which each

component of religiosity separately functioned as a predictor variable. For example, the public and private levels of religiosity in the American female subsample were directly connected to their couple's satisfaction in a negative way. Similarly, Russian women's ideological religiosity indirectly connected to couple's satisfaction in a negative way and, moreover, the ideological religiosity exhibited a total negative effect on their couple's satisfaction. However, when (a) the five domains of religiosity were aggregated and (b) using a dyadic lens, the husband's religiosity was brought into equation through the dyadic design and analysis, the results indicated that the female respondents' effect of religiosity was no longer statistically connected to their couple's satisfaction in the subsamples of wives from both cultures. This effect may be a result of the fact that dyadic relationship between spouses (partners) may positively affect couple's satisfaction in female respondents' to a greater degree than their own religious activities so that the negative effect of religiosity could be overcompensated by the positive male partner's religiosity effect.

These sex similarities between the cultures and differences within the cultures also suggested more similarities in the ways religiosity is connected to couple's satisfaction when evaluated in couples at the dyadic level of analysis. The findings from the dyadic analysis supported the idea that cultural differences might not be as important as differences between sexes within each culture in the ways religiosity and couple's satisfaction were experienced. Also, based on these results it may be argued that the two phenomena of religiosity and couple's satisfaction may be indifferent to cultural variations suggesting they are more universal than culture-specific. This argument of the cross-cultural indifference of religiosity linkage to couple's satisfaction appears to have some

merit, as the other studies using APIM and the measures of religiosity and relationship satisfaction found similar results. For example, in a large sample of African-American couples ($n = 485$ couples), Fincham, Ajayi, and Beach (2011) found analogous pattern of statistically significant actor and partner effects of husbands on their own and on their wives' marital satisfaction but no statistically significant actor and partner effects of the wives' religiosity on their own and their husbands' marital satisfaction. Pereyra, Sandberg, Bean, and Busby (2015) using APIM on 319 heterosexual Latino, Anglo and mixed couples investigated among other questions the relationship between spirituality and relationship quality. Pereyra et al. found a similar pattern of the generally positive link of actor and partner effect from Latino male spirituality on relationship quality for husbands and their wives, but no effects were found from the wives' spirituality on both spouses' relationship quality except Latina wives with Anglo husbands. This dissertation's results husbands' actor and partner effect of religiosity on their and their wives couple's satisfaction were in line with other cross-cultural studies providing additional evidence of the cross-cultural universality of religiosity and couple's satisfaction.

These findings have to be cautiously taken within the context of samples' limitations and require further verification in the next research projects. Nonetheless, the findings bring additional evidence to support universal human experiences rather than cultural variation about the connections of religiosity and couple's satisfaction in couples measured and analyzed at the dyadic level. These results are limited to the characteristics of the self-selected convenience sample but are informative for therapists and other practitioners as well as for researchers, educators, and clergy because they bring results of exploratory testing of relational religiosity model between the sexes and that of APIM

within the couples. The study employed a cross-sectional design; thus, the next step might be implementing a longitudinal design. Similarly, because the study dealt with the relationship, another point for future studies may be analyzing the whole relational religiosity model with five predictors, five mediators, and one outcome at the dyadic level of analysis to evaluate the mediation effects accounting for the actor and partner effects in couples. Finally, taking the same model into a third culture is one more possible avenue for future research.

5.3 Conclusion

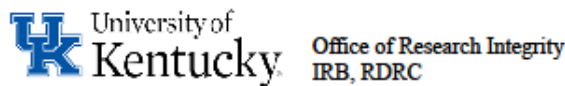
A large proportion of individuals in the United States and Russia confess a religion, are spiritual, or both; they may genuinely believe in the Divine, Higher Power, or theistically believe in God, they may or may not attend religious services, pray or read the religious texts individually; they may be interested in learning new information on religious topics, and; finally, people may experience the intervention of God or the Divine in their lives. All of the above are translated into meaningful practices that people engage in their family context; therefore, researchers, practitioners, and others express high interest in the links between experienced religiosity and couple's satisfaction. The discourse of religiosity's effects on couple's satisfaction has gone far above and beyond of "couples who pray together stay together" into researching further the relational processes that appear to be at play when explaining couple's satisfaction and connecting it to one's religiosity. The understudied important aspects of religiosity's effect on relationship satisfaction are the processes through which religiosity either strengthens the couple's relationship satisfaction or weakens it. This study contributes to the discourse of

religiosity's effects as well as that of the relational processes that are linked to a couple's satisfaction positively or negatively and explicitly accounting for the interpersonal effects.

This dissertation went beyond a general term of "religious participation" and specifically targeted various domains of religiosity, such as intrinsic (personal), extrinsic (public), ideological (the act of believing in God or the Divine), intellectual (having interest in religious and spiritual topics), and experiential religiosity (having a sense of God or Divine intending to communicate with the human or human sensitivity to the Divine presence) (Huber & Huber, 2012). This holistic approach to evaluating religiosity's effect on couple's satisfaction was met with a complex five-variable mediation model, in which relational virtues and relational equality were simultaneously tested, and the testing was applied in two cultures and for each sex within the culture. Moreover, this study went further in methods' advancement and analyzed the effects of religiosity on couple's satisfaction through an actor-partner interdependence model (Kenny et al., 2006) that provided sufficient evidence to suggest more similarities than differences between the sexes across two cultures with regard to actor and partner effects of one's religiosity on their own and their partner's satisfaction with their committed intimate relationship.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROTOCOL



Protocol violation updates – updated CFs, flyers, recruitment, RD/proc, increased # of subjects

Modification Review	Approval Ends	IRB Number
	August 30, 2017	16-0463-P4S

TO: Ilya Okhotnikov
315 Funkhouser
0054
PI phone #: (859) 447-1221

FROM: Chairperson/Vice Chairperson
Institutional Review Board (IRB)

SUBJECT: Approval of Modification Request for Protocol 16-0463-P4S

DATE: April 21, 2017

On April 13, 2017, the Institutional Review Board approved your request for modifications in your protocol entitled:

How Relationship Virtues Connect Religion and Couple Relationship Satisfaction

If your modification request necessitated a change in your approved informed consent/assent form(s), attached is the new IRB approved consent/assent form(s) to be used when enrolling subjects. [Note, subjects can only be enrolled using informed consent/assent forms which have a valid "IRB Approval" stamp, unless waiver from this requirement was granted by the IRB.

Note that at Continuation Review, you will be asked to submit a brief summary of any modifications approved by the IRB since initial review or the last continuation review, which may impact subject safety or welfare. Please take this approved modification into consideration when preparing your summary.

For information describing investigator responsibilities after obtaining IRB approval, download and read the document "PI Guidance to Responsibilities, Qualifications, Records and Documentation of Human Subjects Research" from the Office of Research Integrity's Guidance and Policy Documents web page [<http://www.research.uky.edu/ori/human/guidance.htm#PIresp>]. Additional information regarding IRB review, federal regulations, and institutional policies may be found through ORI's web site [<http://www.research.uky.edu/ori>]. If you have questions, need additional information, or would like a paper copy of the above mentioned document, contact the Office of Research Integrity at (859) 257-9428.

M. Van Tubergen, PhD/ah

Chairperson/Vice Chairperson

see blue.

315 Kinkead Hall | Lexington, KY 40506-0057 | P: 859-257-9428 | F: 859-257-8995 | www.research.uky.edu/ori/

At Equal Opportunity University

Continuation Expedited Review

Approval Ends
August 27, 2018

IRB Number
16-0463-P4S

TO: Ilya Okhotnikov
315 Funkhouser
0054
PI phone #: (859) 447-1221

FROM: Non-medical Institutional Review Board (IRB)

SUBJECT: Approval of Protocol Number 16-0463-P4S

DATE: August 30, 2017

On August 28, 2017, the Non-medical Institutional Review Board approved your protocol entitled:

How Relationship Virtues Connect Religion and Couple Relationship Satisfaction

Approval is effective from August 28, 2017 until August 27, 2018 and extends to any consent/assent form, cover letter, and/or phone script. If applicable, attached is the IRB approved consent/assent document(s) to be used when enrolling subjects. [Note, subjects can only be enrolled using consent/assent forms which have a valid "IRB Approval" stamp unless special waiver has been obtained from the IRB.] Prior to the end of this period, you will be sent a Continuation Review Report Form which must be completed and returned to the Office of Research Integrity so that the protocol can be reviewed and approved for the next period.

In implementing the research activities, you are responsible for complying with IRB decisions, conditions and requirements. The research procedures should be implemented as approved in the IRB protocol. It is the principal investigator's responsibility to ensure any changes planned for the research are submitted for review and approval by the IRB prior to implementation. Protocol changes made without prior IRB approval to eliminate apparent hazards to the subject(s) should be reported in writing immediately to the IRB. Furthermore, discontinuing a study or completion of a study is considered a change in the protocol's status and therefore the IRB should be promptly notified in writing.

For information describing investigator responsibilities after obtaining IRB approval, download and read the document "PI Guidance to Responsibilities, Qualifications, Records and Documentation of Human Subjects Research" from the Office of Research Integrity's IRB Survival Handbook web page [<http://www.research.uky.edu/ori/IRB-Survival-Handbook.html#PIresponsibilities>]. Additional information regarding IRB review, federal regulations, and institutional policies may be found through ORI's web site [<http://www.research.uky.edu/ori>]. If you have questions, need additional information, or would like a paper copy of the above mentioned document, contact the Office of Research Integrity at (859) 257-9428.

see blue.

315 Kinhead Hall | Lexington, KY 40506-0057 | P: 859-257-9428 | F: 859-257-8995 | www.research.uky.edu/ori/

Original Document ID: 00000000

APPENDIX 2. RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

No contact information for ResearchMatch survey:

Couple Relationships Research

Your response is needed! All who are 18 years or older and who have lived together for at least 1 year (married or not) are invited to take an online survey. The questions and answers about your relationships with your partner are confidential and anonymous.

You may choose to participate in a drawing for a gift card (\$20 each; total of 50 cards), but chances will be doubled for the first 50 who complete the survey.

The purpose of this study is to explore connections between relationship satisfaction, commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, attitudes toward sanctification of marriage, and equality

of couple relationships as informed by the absence or presence of their personal religion/spirituality.

In Russian:

Интернет опрос для пар

Приглашаются супружеские пары или просто проживающие вместе на конфиденциальный онлайн опрос. Вопросы – об отношениях с Вашим супругом / партнёром.

Вы можете участвовать, если:

- * Вам уже 18 лет и
- * Вы живёте вместе не менее одного года

Среди участников будут разыграны подарочные карты. Всего будет разыграно 10 карт по 30\$, две карты по 200\$, одна карта в 300\$. Если Вы пройдёте опрос, Ваш email введётся в розыгрыш 1 (один) раз. Если Вы и Ваш супруг (партнёр) пройдёте опрос, Ваш email, будет введён в розыгрыш ещё 4 раза. У Вашего супруга email тоже будет введён 5 раз.

Цель: изучить такие качества близких отношений пары, как удовлетворённость, жертвенность, обязательство (посвящение) друг другу, прощение, отношение к освящению брака и равенство, учитывая личную духовность или религиозность.

English Flyer

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY RESEARCH

Online Survey for Couples



Researchers at the University of Kentucky are inviting couples who are married, or simply living together, to answer a confidential online survey. Questions will be about your relationship with your partner. The purpose of this study is to explore relationship qualities such as satisfaction, sacrifice, commitment, forgiveness, attitudes toward marriage, and equality considering religion or spirituality.

You may be eligible to participate if you are:

- 18 years of age or older; and
- Married or living with your partner for no less than 1 year.

Participants will be entered for a chance to win a gift card. A total of ten \$30, two \$200, and one \$300 gift cards will be awarded. If you complete the survey, your email will be entered into the drawing one time. If you and your partner both complete the survey, your email will be entered into the drawing four more times, and your partner will also be entered five times.

The survey is here: <https://goo.gl/TbTq9E>
Please share this link via social media/email



Questions? Please contact:
Ilya Okhotnikov
ilya.ok@uky.edu
(859) 447-1221



Research
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www.UKclinicalresearch.com

Online Couple Survey

AGFS-013_flyer#

110

Социологическое исследование

Интернет опрос для пар



Приглашаются супружеские пары или просто проживающие вместе на конфиденциальный онлайн опрос, проводимый Госуниверситетом Кентуки (University of Kentucky). Вопросы – об отношениях с Вашим супругом / партнёром. **Цель:** изучить такие качества близких отношений пары, как удовлетворённость, жертвенность, обязательство (посвящение) друг другу, прощение, отношение к освящению брака и равенство, учитывая личную духовность или религиозность.

Вы можете участвовать, если:

- Вам уже 18 лет и
- Вы живёте вместе не менее одного года

Среди участников будут разыграны подарочные карты. Всего будет разыграно 10 карт по 30\$, две карты по 200\$, одна карта в 300\$. Если Вы пройдёте опрос, Ваш email введётся в розыгрыш 1 (один) раз. Если Вы и Ваш супруг (партнёр) пройдёте опрос, Ваш email, будет введён в розыгрыш ещё 4 раза. У Вашего супруга email тоже будет введён 5 раз.

Опрос здесь: <https://goo.gl/TbTq9E>

Пожалуйста, распространите ссылку
в социальных сетях и по эл.почте

Вопросы? Обращайтесь:

Охотников Илья Анатольевич

Email: ilya.ok@uky.edu

SMS, обратный звонок:

+7 (916) 002-88-98



UK Research
Университет равных возможностей

www.UKclinicalresearch.com

Online опрос пар

AGFS-013_flyer #

APPENDIX 3. THE CENTRALITY OF RELIGION SCALE

(CRS-15; Huber, & Huber, 2012)

Parallel English and Russian Versions

Indicate your answer on a scale from 0 (do not) to 8 (absolutely fully or very often) to statements:

Russian: Пользуясь шкалой от 0 (совсем нет) до 5 (абсолютно полностью или очень часто) ответьте на вопросы:

Area	English	Russian
Intellect	1. How often do you think about religious issues?	1. Как часто Вы думаете на религиозные темы?
Ideology	2. To what extent do you believe that God or something divine exists?	2. На сколько Вы верите, что Бог или что-то божественное существует?
Public	3. How often do you take part in religious services?	3. Как часто Вы посещаете религиозные служения?
Private	4. How often do you pray or meditate?	4. Как часто Вы молитесь или медитируете?
Experience	5. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine intervenes in your life?	5. Как часто Вы переживаете ситуации, когда чувствуете, что Бог или что-то божественное вмешивается в Вашу жизнь?
Intellect	6. How interested are you in learning more about religious topics?	6. На сколько Вы заинтересованы получением информации на религиозные темы
Ideology	7. To what extent do you believe in an afterlife—e.g. immortality of the soul, resurrection of the dead or reincarnation?	7. На сколько Вы верите в жизнь после смерти, т.е. в бессмертие души, воскресение мёртвых или реинкарнацию?
Public	8. How important is to take part in religious services?	8. На сколько важно участвовать в религиозных службах/служениях?
Private	9. How important is personal prayer or meditation for you?	9. На сколько важна для Вас Ваша личная молитва/медитация?
Experience	10. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine wants to communicate or to reveal	10: Как часто вы испытываете ситуации, в которых у вас есть ощущение, что Бог или что-то

	something to you?	божественное хочет общаться или открыть Вам что-то?
Intellect	11. How often do you keep yourself informed about religious questions through radio, television, internet, newspapers, or books?	11: Как часто вы держать себя в курсе религиозных вопросов через радио, телевидение, Интернет, газеты или книги?
Ideology	12. In your opinion, how probable is it that a higher power really exists	12: На ваш взгляд, насколько вероятно, что высшая сила действительно существует
Public	13. How important is it for you to be connected to a religious community?	13: Насколько важно для вас, чтобы быть связанным с религиозной общиной?
Private	14. How often do you pray or connect with the divine spontaneously when inspired by daily situations?	14: Ежедневных ситуациях, когда спонтанно приходит вдохновение, как часто вы молитесь или соединитесь с божеством?
Experience	15. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine is present?	15: Как часто вы испытываете ситуации, в которых у вас есть ощущение, что Бог или что-то божественное присутствует?

APPENDIX 4. COMMITMENT LEVEL ITEMS

(Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998)

Parallel English and Russian Versions

Indicate your agreement on a scale from 0 (do not agree) to 8 (completely agree) to statements:

Russian: Пользуясь шкалой от 0 (не согласен) до 8 (полностью согласен) ответьте на вопросы:

English	Russian
1. I want our relationship to last for a very long time.	1. Я хочу, чтобы наши отношения длились очень долгого.
2. I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner.	2. Я намерен поддерживать мои отношения с моим партнером.
3. I would not feel very upset if our relationship were to end in the near future.	3. Я бы не очень расстроился, если наши отношения прекратились бы в ближайшее время.
4. It is likely that I will date someone other than my partner within the next year.	4. Вполне вероятно, что я буду ходить на свидания с кем-то, кроме моего партнера через год.
5. I feel very attached to our relationship—very strongly linked to my partner.	5. Я чувствую сильную привязанность в наших отношениях—очень тесно связан с моим партнером.
6. I want our relationship to last forever.	6. Я хочу, чтобы наши отношения были навсегда.
7. I am oriented toward the long-term future of my relationship (for example, I imagine being with my partner several years from now).	7. Я ориентирован на долгосрочное будущее наших отношений (например, я представляю, что буду с моим партнером и через много лет).

APPENDIX 5. THE SATISFACTION WITH SACRIFICE SCALE

(Stanley & Markman, 1992)

Parallel English and Russian Versions

Please, circle the best answer from the scale of 1 (extremely disagree) to 7 (extremely agree) to the following questions:

Russian: Пожалуйста, обведите ваш ответ от 1 (совсем не согласен) до 7 (полностью согласен) в следующих предложениях:

English	Russian
1. It can be personally fulfilling to give up something for my partner.	1. Отказ от чего-то ради моего партнёра мне лично может принести удовлетворение.
2. I do not get much fulfillment out of sacrificing for my partner.	2. Я не получаю много удовлетворения, жертвуя ради моего партнера.
3. I get satisfaction out of doing things for my partner, even if it means I miss out on something I want for myself.	3. Я получаю удовлетворение, когда делаю что-то для моего партнера, даже если мне самому чего-то не хватает.
4. I'm not that kind of a person that find satisfaction in putting aside my interest for the sake of my relationship with my partner.	4. Я не такой человек, чтоб получать удовольствие от приношения в жертву своих интересов ради отношений с партнёром.
5. It makes me feel good to sacrifice for my partner.	5. Я чувствую себя хорошо, когда жертвую чем-либо ради моего партнера.
6. Giving something up for my partner is frequently not worth the trouble.	6. Часто отказ от чего-то ради моего партнера не стоит того.

APPENDIX 6. THE DECISION TO FORGIVE SCALE

(Davis et al., 2015)

Parallel English and Russian Versions

Please, indicate your agreement with items using 5-point ratings ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) at times when you had to forgive your partner.

Russian: Пожалуйста, обведите Ваш ответ на шкале от 1 (сильно не согласен) до 5 (сильно согласен) в тех случаях, когда Вы прощали партнера

English	Russian
1. I have decided to forgive him or her	1. Я решил простить его или ее
2. I made a commitment to forgive him or her	2. Я взял на себя обязательство простить его или ее
3. I have made up my mind to forgive him or her	3. Я решился простить его или ее
4. My choice is to forgive him or her	4. Простить его или ее – это мой выбор
5. My choice is to release any negative feelings I have	5. Чтобы освободиться от любых своих негативных чувств я решил простить
6. I have chosen not to intentionally harbor resentment toward him or her	6. Я решил намеренно не взгrevать негодование на него или нее

APPENDIX 7. THE PERCEIVED SACRED QUALITIES SCALE

(Mahoney et al., 1999)

Please indicate whether your marriage is more closely described by the adjective on the left or the adjective on the right by circling the appropriate indicator.

Neutral							
1. Holy	*	*	*	0	*	*	Unholy
2. Inspiring	*	*	*	0	*	*	Uninspiring
3. Blessed	*	*	*	0	*	*	Cursed
4. Everlasting	*	*	*	0	*	*	Temporary
5. Awesome	*	*	*	0	*	*	Ordinary
6. Heavenly	*	*	*	0	*	*	Earthly
7. Spiritual	*	*	*	0	*	*	Worldly (Secular)
8. Religious	*	*	*	0	*	*	Non-religious
9. Mysterious	*	*	*	0	*	*	Routine

The Russian Version of the Perceived Sacred Qualities Scale

Russian. Пожалуйста, укажите, к какому прилагательному на левой или на правой стороне Ваш брак ближе всего, обведите соответствующий символ. Центральный символ – это ноль, т.е. нейтральный ответ.

Нейтрально							
1. Святой	*	*	*	0	*	*	Не святой
2. Воодушевляющий	*	*	*	0	*	*	Скучный
3. Благословенный	*	*	*	0	*	*	Проклятый
4. Вечный	*	*	*	0	*	*	Временный
5. Возвышенный	*	*	*	0	*	*	Обычный
6. Небесный	*	*	*	0	*	*	Земной
7. Духовный	*	*	*	0	*	*	Мирской (светский)
8. Религиозный	*	*	*	0	*	*	Нерелигиозный
9. Таинственный	*	*	*	0	*	*	Рутинный

APPENDIX 8. A MEASURE OF PERCEIVED EQUALITY IN MARRIAGE

(Day & Acock, 2013)

Parallel English and Russian Versions

Please, indicate on the following 5-point rate your agreement with a description of your relationships with your spouse below. Strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), slightly agree (3), agree (4), strongly agree (5).

Russian: Пожалуйста, обведите Ваш ответ на вопросы о ваших взаимоотношениях с супругом. На сколько Вы согласны, что они именно такие (или могут быть такими), как описывается? Категорически не согласен (1), не согласен (2), немного согласен (3), согласен (4), абсолютно согласен (5).

English	Russian
1. My partner tends to discount my opinion	1. Обычно супруг моё мнение не учитывает
2. My partner does not listen to me	2. Супруг меня не слушает
3. When I want to talk about a problem in our relationship, my partner often refuses to talk with me about it	3. Когда я хочу поговорить о проблеме в наших отношениях, мой супруг часто не хочет об этом говорить
4. My partner tends to dominate our conversations	4. В наших разговорах мой супруг стремится доминировать
5. When we do not agree on an issue, my partner gives me the cold shoulder	5. Когда мы не согласны в чём-то, мой супруг отстраняется от меня
6. I feel free to express my opinion about issues in our relationship	6. Мне легко говорить с супругом о трудностях в наших отношениях
7. My partner makes decisions that affect our family without talking to me first	7. Мой супруг не обсуждает со мной решения, влияющие на всю нашу семью
8. My partner and I talk about problems until we both agree on a solution	8. Мы с супругом обсуждаем проблемы до тех пор, пока не договоримся
9. When it comes to money, my partner's opinion usually wins out	9. Когда речь идёт о деньгах, решающее слово остаётся за супругом
10. I feel like my partner tries to control me	10. Я чувствую, что мой супруг пытается контролировать меня
11. When it comes to children, my partner's opinion usually wins out	11. Когда речь идёт о воспитании детей, решающее слово остаётся за супругом
12. It often seems my partner can get away with things in our relationship that I can never get away with	12. Часто так бывает, что моему супругу что-то сходит с рук, а мне – нет
13. I feel like I have no choice but to do what my partner wants	13. Я чувствую, что у меня нет вариантов, как только угождать моему супругу
14. My partner has more influence in our relationship than I do	14. Мой супруг имеет больше влияния на наши отношения, чем я
15. When disagreements arise in our relationship, my partner's opinion usually wins out	15. Когда в отношениях у нас несогласия, обычно решающее слово остаётся за супругом

APPENDIX 9. 16-ITEM COUPLES SATISFACTION INDEX, CSI(16)

(Funk & Rogge, 2007).

1. Please indicate the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

Extremely Unhappy	Fairly Unhappy	A Little Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	Extremely Happy	Perfect
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

2. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?

All the Time	Most of the Time	More often than Not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
5	4	3	2	1	0

Using the following scale

Not at All	A Little	Somewhat	Mostly	Almost Completely	Completely
0	1	2	3	4	5

Answer these questions:

3. Our relationship is strong
4. My relationship with my partner makes me happy
5. I have a warm and comfortable relationship with my partner
6. I really feel like part of a team with my partner
7. How rewarding is your relationship with your partner?
8. How well does your partner meet your needs?
9. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?
10. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?

How you feel about your relationship? Base your responses on your first impressions.

11. INTERESTING	5	4	3	2	1	0	BORING
12. BAD	0	1	2	3	4	5	GOOD
13. FULL	5	4	3	2	1	0	EMPTY
14. STURDY	5	4	3	2	1	0	FRAGILE
15. DISCOURAGING	0	1	2	3	4	5	HOPEFUL
16. ENJOYABLE	5	4	3	2	1	0	MISERABLE

The Russian Couple's Satisfaction Index CSI(16R)

(Okhotnikov & Wood, in revision)

1.* Пожалуйста, оцените, насколько Вы лично счастливы в браке в целом?

Чрезвычайно несчастливые	Довольно несчастливые	Немного несчастливые	Счастливые	Очень счастливые	Невероятно счастливые	Само совершенство
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Пожалуйста, укажите ниже Ваши ответы на перечисленные вопросы:

2. Как часто Вы ощущаете, что у вас всё хорошо в отношениях с супругом?

Постоянно	Часто	Чаше думаю, чем не думаю	Время от времени	Изредка	Никогда
5	4	3	2	1	0

Пользуясь следующей шкалой, ответьте на вопросы ниже:

Совсем неправда	Немного правда	Отчасти правда	Обычно правда	Почти полностью правда	Совершенно абсолютно
0	1	2	3	4	5

3. Ваши отношения крепкие?

4. Можете ли Вы сказать, что Вы лично счастливы в отношениях с супругом?

5.* На сколько Вам с супругом тепло и комфортно?

6. Чувствуете ли Вы, что вы с супругом в одной команде?

7.* На сколько в отношениях с супругом Вы ощущаете взаимность (ответное вознаграждение)?

8. Насколько полно Ваш супруг восполняет Ваши нужды?

9. В какой степени ваши взаимоотношения оправдали Ваши первоначальные ожидания?

10.* В целом, насколько ваши взаимоотношения удовлетворяют Вас лично?

Поставьте у каждого вопроса отметку ближе к тем словам (они как слева, так и справа), которые лучше всего описывают Ваши чувства об отношениях с супругом. Чем ближе к слову, тем сильнее Ваши чувства (переживания). Отвечайте по первому впечатлению и ощущению.

11. Интересные	5 4 3 2 1 0	Скучные
12. Плохие	0 1 2 3 4 5	Хорошие
13. Наполняющие	5 4 3 2 1 0	Опустошающие
14. Крепкие	5 4 3 2 1 0	Хрупкие
15. Приносящие разочарование	0 1 2 3 4 5	Обнадёживающие
16. Приятные	5 4 3 2 1 0	Противные

Примечание: Первоначальные номера вопросов шкалы из 32 вопросов (первая позиция) были заменены на порядковые номера от 1 до 16 (вторая позиция) следующим образом: 1 = 1, 2 = 5, 3 = 9, 4 = 11, 5 = 12, 6 = 17, 7 = 19, 8 = 20, 9 = 21, 10 = 22, 11 = 26, 12 = 27, 13 = 28, 14 = 30, 15 = 31, 16 = 32. *Заменённые вопросы шкалы CSI(4) это вопросы 1, 5, 7, 10 в данной шкале CSI(16R).

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VITA

1. Educational institutions attended and degrees already awarded
 - 1.1. Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky. Doctor of Ministry in Family Ministry and Counseling.
 - 1.2. Pentecostal Theological Seminary, Cleveland, Tennessee. Master of Divinity in Pastoral Ministry
 - 1.3. Kalashnikov Izhevsk State Technical University, Izhevsk, Russia. Bachelor of Science in Design and Technology of Radio-Electronic Devices (RED)
2. Professional positions held
 - 2013-2018. Graduate Teaching Assistant. Department of Family Sciences, University of Kentucky. Lexington, Kentucky.
 - 2006-2013. National President. Chair of the Department of Family Psychology and Childhood. Eurasian Theological Seminary, Moscow, Russia.
 - 2004-2005. Provost. Eurasian Theological Seminary, Moscow, Russia.
 - 2003-2004. Student Dean in Residence. Eurasian Theological Seminary, Moscow, Russia.
3. Scholastic and professional honors
 - 2015-2018. Graduate School Lyman T. Johnson Academic Year Fellowship. University of Kentucky.
 - 2001-2003. International Leadership Initiative Scholarship. Asbury Theological Seminary. Wilmore, Kentucky.
4. Professional publications

Okhotnikov, I. A. & Klinovskiy, A. I. (2016). Развод и повторный брак [Divorce and Remarriage]. In S. Sannikov (Ed.), *Славянский библейский комментарий* (pp. 1182–1183). Kiev, Ukraine: Knigonosha. (In Russian).

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Ilya A. Okhotnikov